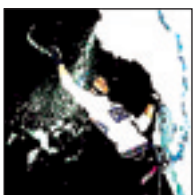


Skiing and skating too tame?
Grab a couple of ice picks and
try your hand at ice climbing
this weekend.

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Get to know Han Meilin
through his 3,000 works of
art.

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Liu Jincheng is a Chinese
traditional doctor who lives
between Yin and Yang.

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A group of anti-Taliban soldiers assemble around a tank

Photo by Wang Lin

New Year, New Hope for People of Afghanistan

By our staff reporters Xia Lei and Wang Lin

From December 31, 2001 to January 8, 2002, Beijing Today journalists Wang Lin and Xia Lei visited the cities of Kabul and Maydانشahr, in Afghanistan. They spoke to a variety of ordinary people there, seeking to gain a picture of daily life in that war-torn country. They came away with the feeling that Afghans are confident about their future and eager for a better, peaceful life.

Froshga Bazaar

On January 1, 2002, Dadullah, an Afghan soldier walks quietly along a dusty street in the Froshga bazaar (market). One and half months ago, he and other soldiers from the north attacked Taliban forces holding the city and eventually took control of it.

Froshga is the biggest bazaar in Kabul, the capital of this mountainous country. It is crowded, almost exclusively with men. Of the few women to be seen here in the market, most still cover their face with a veil. They are reluctant to remove them, even after the withdrawal of the Taliban.

During another battle with Taliban forces several years ago, Dallah was captured and imprisoned by the Taliban in Kandahar for two years.

Dallah is 40 years old. He has come to the market to buy some necessities for himself. He says life has returned to normal for him here in Kabul. "I hope it will become better and better. Because we created peace and serenity for the future of Afghanistan."

Wakil Muhammad is a moneychanger in the market. Much to our surprise, there are some 2,000 people in this enormous market engaged in the business of changing money. One U.S. dollar is currently worth 24,000 Afghani, which can buy two cans of Coca-Cola.

"I did the same business under the Taliban regime, and life was bad. Now it is better and I can support my family by earning about 200,000 Afghani (about 8 U.S. dollars)," Muhammad tells us.

Sadir is jobless. He approaches us and begins to chat as we wander around the market. He used to be a government employee, but now has no work to do. He tells us he hopes foreign countries will provide the Afghani people with economic and political assistance, as they promised.

Frahuaz, a 12-year-old girl, has come to the market to buy something to decorate her long and beautiful hair. Two other girls, their faces hidden behind veils, accompany her. Frahuaz wears a black suit with medium-heel leather shoes. She is now in grade six at school. "I should become educated. Now it is my winter vocation, but I read everyday at home," she says.

(Continued on Page 8)

War Zone Air Route Reopens

By Gao Shan/Jiao Pei

Beijing-United Arab Emirates is back in business this week. Sixty passengers boarded the Beijing-Urumqi-Sharjah route after it reopened for the first time since September 28 last year.

China Southern Airlines was dubbed the "war zone airline" for its unique route from China to the United Arab Emirates. Flight captain Zhang Shibin said although the CZ329 scheduled flight will fly over Pakistan, Iran and other places, safety would certainly be guaranteed. Of the passengers who boarded the flight from Beijing, half were destined for Sharjah, the Emirati city of Ash Shariqah, one of six United Arab Emirates states.

The flight time is more than nine hours. An in-flight movie, a selection of duty-free goods and drinks are available.

By Shan Jinliang

The founder of a successful fish head restaurant empire has fired back at his critics over the closure of seven Beijing branches, vowing to win back capital city customers.

Not so long ago, the CEO of Chengdu Tanyutou Hotpot Chain Corporation was saying his company was the Chinese answer to KFC. Indeed, after Tanyutou (Beijing) debuted in Dongzhimen in June 1998, 10 more branches followed within the year.

But that number last year fell from 11 to four, prompting media speculation that the chain had fallen upon harder times.

But talking to *Beijing Today*, fish head mogul Tan Chang'an blasted back at his doubters, saying business was booming and if anything, better than ever.

"Ninety percent of our branches across China have made profits from the very beginning," said Tan, "and they continue to make profits today."

"Tanyutou will open 30 more restaurants in China, taking our national overall total to 100. We will soon open the biggest Tanyutou restaurant in all of China in Beijing."

The company's annual turnover increased 40-50% in 2001, said Tan on Tuesday. As the 16th-largest restaurant chain in China, Chengdu-based Tanyutou Hotpot Chain Corporation has 20 wholly-owned and 50 shared ownership branches, 70 in total.

So far.

Black Monday

For the manager of the Hangtianqiao branch of Beijing Tanyutou, Monday was the "worst business day in our history."

About 30 percent of tables sat empty at 7:30 pm — peaktime.

"Not long ago," said Tang Bin, "people were lining up for a delicious fish head."

It was the media that created the stink, says Tang.

"A negative report by *Beijing Evening News* hurt our turnover," said Tang. "It tarnished the whole image of Tanyutou in Beijing."

An in-depth December 17 article by reporter Yang Wei compared Tanyutou with Shao'e'zai, a Cantonese restaurant chain that peaked a few years ago with seven Beijing branches.

There was something familiar about CEO Lin Weicheng saying Shao'e'zai would one day be "the Chinese McDonald's".

Today, there are three branches in Beijing.

Yang attributed Chinese characteristics to the decline of both companies and detailed differences of opinion between Tanyutou Beijing franchise holders and the Sichuan capital headquarters.

As soon as the article hit the streets, said branch manager Tang Bin, business immediately declined. As the four remaining Beijing branches waited and wilted, Chengdu failed to respond, said Tang.

Hantianqiao and Dongzhimen res-

Hotpot Hot Shot Hits Back



My fish head franchise
still open for business

— Tan

A new Lilaodie (Grandpa Li) restaurant, formerly Tanyutou

taurants finally ran their own advertisements in *Beijing Youth Daily*. But by then, Tang believes, most of the damage had already been done.

Public relations fiasco

Sichuan headquarters does not pay enough attention to media monitoring and public relations, said Yu Yuenan, chairman of the board overseeing the four remaining Beijing Tanyutou restaurants. Your McDonald's or your KFCs would never have allowed such a story to pass through newspapers unresponded, he said.

In June last year, Tanyutou recruited senior management from Chengdu McDonald's and KFC restaurants. A special group has been organized to

prepare for listing on the stock market.

"We will open restaurants in Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea this year," said Tan.

Tan conceded teething problems in working out his franchise system, especially in Beijing. These problems came about in the restaurants under shared ownership with Beijing Wangjing New Century Company and Beijing Zhongtai Company, *Beijing Evening News* reported.

The culprit appears to be Tan's attempts to standardize his franchise operations. To avoid repeating well-publicized mistakes of previous failed Chinese franchises, Tan elected in 1999 to set up his own staff training and raw material production base.

On the advice of others, Mai Tianshu, a former *China Youth Daily* journalist, Tan committed his company to this brand building strategy. "We want all our restaurants to share the same flour and the same taste," said Tan.

So long, thanks for fish

The strategy led to negotiations in Chengdu in February between 14 legal representatives of about 30 Tanyutou restaurants hinging on the use of the national trademark, internal management modes and raw materials. Some investors, said Yu, were unhappy with their 35-42% share of the profits in exchange for the Chengdu Tanyutou Hotpot Corp trademark

which offers less in exchange than certain other franchises one might mention.

"The price of raw materials provided by headquarters is also two to three times higher than that of the Chengdu market," said Yu.

Yu's boss flatly denies this.

"Actually," said Tan "the price of our raw materials consistently declined last year. Those who claim they are too expensive are just using that as an excuse."

One such complainant, Beijing Wangjin New Century, says last year it beseeched Chengdu to cut the price of raw materials for Tanyutou hotpot.

With no concession forthcoming and the raw materials used up, the Zhongguancun, Shuangjing and Asian Village Tanyutou restaurants stayed open and changed their brand name to "Lilaodie" (Grandpa Li).

The restaurants opened on October 28 last year with the new name and a new investor, Beijing Jinjiyuan Commerce and Trading Company.

"This all just goes to show how China's business people pay insufficient attention to intellectual property, and it was the same old story with Shao'e'zai," said Gu Huimin, an assistant professor of hotel marketing from the China Tourism Institute.

"Nobody complained when they signed the cooperation contracts with Chengdu Tanyutou," said Tan.



Photos by Chen Shuyi

The remaining Hangtianqiao branch of Beijing Tanyutou

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI

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Coaches Wave Goodbye to Double Bed

By Xiao Rong

Women travelers need no longer experience the embarrassment of having to huddle up next to male strangers on a coach sleeping berth as of January 1 this year, when more space has been allocated to passengers on a coach.

More than 80% of China's 40,000 coaches with sleeping berths need to be refitted, according to Ms. Meng Qiu, vice director of the vehicle management department of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MTC).

"Safety and comfort are the two major factors that should be emphasized in long-distance coach transportation. So those coaches with double or triple berths will be refitted into purely single berths. The space between two neighboring berths should be no less than 35 centimeters," Meng added.

The move was announced in a regulation jointly promulgated by the State Economic & Trade Com-

mission, the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications.

"Although the refit of non-standard coaches may lead to the decrease of capacity from 36-37 berths to 26-28 berths for each coach, the safety and comfort of passengers have been guaranteed," said Meng.

"The dangers of sexual harassment or loss of belongings do exist, especially for female passengers, due to the narrow berths," said Meng.

Coaches that fail to refit cannot be officially registered and therefore will not be permitted into the transportation market, according to the new stipulation.

"It's a great relief to hear this news. I can never sleep all night for fear of being harassed because the berth is too narrow for two people," a woman passenger who often takes coaches expressed her enthusiasm for the consideration of women's interests.



Passengers enjoy more space and privacy

Photo by Jacky

No Sign of Air Ticket Price Hearing

By Xiao Rong

A hearing on airplane ticket prices will not be held, revealed Wang Yang, deputy minister of the State Development Planning Commission (SDPC) at a press conference.

The press conference, which was for China's first government-sponsored price hearing on railway tickets, also announced that 33 formal delegates, including 12 from the general public, have been selected for tomorrow's railway price hearing.

An airplane price hearing will not be held at present due to the restructuring of the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), Wang told the Beijing Today reporter.

"Aviation enterprises will break away from CAAC after the restructuring so that aviation enterprises rather than the current CAAC will be involved in the new price system. SDPC will formulate a new price plan for airplane tickets by then," Wang added.

The prices of airplane tickets have always been a hot topic as well as railway ticket prices. Private discounts of airplane tickets as well as discount advertisements prevail despite the ban imposed by CAAC.

Beijing to Build Lethal Injection Chamber

By Zhao Zhongpeng / Shan Jinliang

Beijing is considering different locations for a lethal injection chamber, said the Beijing People's Higher Court.

Four conditions are required for a lethal injection chamber: 1) Secure. 2) Lawful. The condemned has to be checked and approved before the execution by the court, which is required to be located near the lethal injection chamber. 3) Humanitarian. In a humanitarian spirit, the execution site has to be clean and in good order to entitle the condemned to die gracefully. 4) Scientific. No poison is allowed to be used on the condemned. The dosage will be set according to the health condition of the condemned, said Tan Jingsheng, an official from Beijing People's Higher Court.

Criminals executed by lethal injection across China have died with no expression of pain on the face in anything from dozens of seconds to a couple of minutes.

20 Years in the World of English

By Shan Jinliang

Holding a symposium as a birthday gift to itself, the *World of English* has just celebrated its 20th birthday with China National Radio.

Run by the 104-year-old Commercial Press, the monthly magazine has published 163 editions with a total sale of 36 million copies. As one of the leading English-learning magazines, the *World of English* has won recognition from a number of college students, professionals and other proficient English speakers. "At present, we can sell 200 thousand copies for each edition," said the person in charge of the *World of English*.

A special edition of the magazine is to be published in February 2002 containing new columns such as Prismatic World, Window on America, Military Affairs, Literary Garden and Movie & TV Stars.



Wild horses run to keep warm in icy Xinjiang

Wild Horses Confined to Winter Quarters

By Jiang Zhong

The remaining 24 wild horses, part of the 27 sent back to their original habitat on Kala Maili Natural Reserve in Northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on August 28 last year, were lured back to stables on January 5, 2002. Death of three wild horses and the weak condition of the whole herd meant they had to be reconfined.

Instinct saves herd from starvation

The horses stayed within nine kilometers of the observation station until early December last year when the temperature plummeted to 40 degrees below zero. The wild horses migrated to a milder area where their breed had previously spent winters.

Gu Jinghe, an expert on wild horses at the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, pointed out that despite the death of three wild horses, the institute had gained much valuable information that was previously speculative. The wild horses have still retained the instinct of battling against the elements by seasonal migration.

As to why three wild horses died, Gu explained that a large herd of wild donkeys was found near the wild horses several days ago and that they had eaten the plants the wild horses live on. Wild donkeys can find food even in the desert, whereas wild horses are not as versatile. Not only wild donkeys, but also large numbers of various domestic livestock herds fought for food along with the wild horses. The horses could migrate to warmer places but were unable to find enough food. A mare recently died



through starvation or attack from wolves, after which its foal also perished.

The wild horses will be set free again in the spring

Gu continued that the horses' survival capacity, such as speed, alertness, and sense of orientation had improved to some extent during the first attempt. Thus from this perspective, their stay in the wild had proved a success.

At least three years would be needed for the program of releasing wild horses back to the wild to be successful. During this period the wild horses will be kept under close surveillance, and will be confined again promptly whenever necessary.

Zhu Fude, director of the Wild Fauna Protection Institute of Xinjiang Forestry Bureau, said that spring is the best season for releas-

ing the wild horses back to the wild. Over the summer and autumn the wild horses will get enough time to acclimatize to the new environment by accumulating enough fat and body heat for protection against the cold. Two herds of wild horses will be set free again in the spring this year, with the total number reaching 18.

Since the death of a foal occurred soon after the wild horses' return to nature, Zhu suggested that no foal would be set free for experimental purposes.

Background

Only some 1,300 wild horses remain in 112 breeding centers and zoos around the world, among which 113 are in Xinjiang. China is the first country to attempt releasing the rare animal back to the wild.

The species has been reduced in numbers largely due to competition with domestic livestock for grazing land and water. A program of bringing wild horses back to China was launched in 1985. Over the following years, 18 horses from Germany and Britain were adopted by the Wild Horse Breeding Center in Xinjiang.



Fox Corp Hunts Down Imposter Fox

By Xiao Rong

Fox Racing Corporation of the U.S. is suing Beijing Hua Wei Center Co, Ltd and Zhongyou Department Store Co, Ltd for illegally selling faked Fox sportswear.

Fox Racing Corp plans to sue the two Beijing stores in America where the trademark is registered, said Beijing Yinluwei Trading, the sole agent of Fox in the Chinese mainland, at a press conference held this Monday.

20% of the trademark value, which is worth 1.5 billion yuan, will have to be compensated, according to Xue Yong, manager of Yinluwei Trading.

"Fox has not formally entered the Chinese market, but to our disappointment, it only took 83 yuan to buy faked Fox sportswear at the two stores," said Xue.

"Chinese enterprises should comply with international rules after China's WTO entry. We feel angry about the infringement of our trademark, which is against international trading laws," Xue added.

The two stores, however, expressed their disagreement toward the intention of lawsuit. Mr. Wang of Hua Wei Center told the Beijing Today reporter that Fox Racing Corp has targeted the wrong infringing party and that they must take responsibility for their actions. Mr. Zheng Zixin of Zhongyou Department Store said the store was not responsible for the sale of fakes because they just leased the counters to producers.

Both companies said they would also take legal action to protect their own interests once the lawsuit begins.

"Chinese enterprises should first study foreign laws and international rules after WTO accession to strengthen the consciousness of law, for similar international disputes will be increasingly frequent in the future," said Mr. Lu Tao of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

Electronic Diploma Encounters Forgery

By Xiao Rong

A new kind of forgery has been threatening China's first higher education diploma electronic registration and on-line verification system since it opened on December 19, 2001.

The system was designed to counter forged certificates, enabling prospective employers to double check employees' credentials by entering their names or registration numbers into an online database of universities nationwide.

Fraudsters can cheat the system however by using genuine graduates' information to forge diplomas with their own photos. The verification system currently has no photo recognition function to counter such fraud, according to a China Youth Daily report.

Only the information of last year's university graduates has been loaded into the on-line verification system so far. Photos will be added this year to prevent the above-mentioned forgery, said Zhang Haoming, director of the student department of the Ministry of Education.

Zhang stressed that complete information, including photos, of all university graduates of the past ten years would also be on-line by next year.

"We had planned to add picture information on the verification system, but due to the prohibitive cost of purchasing professional photographing equipment for some universities, the plan didn't come into effect," said Zhang.

"The electronic diploma verification system has greatly reduced the production of forged diplomas, but the system is not as effective as had been expected. Prospective employers should also inspect the identification card of the interviewee, as well as putting more emphasis on individual capability," Zhang added.

Experts say that a credit rating system should be established soon in China besides setting up the electronic diploma verification system.

2.2GHz P4 CPU Launched

By Yang Xiao

Intel introduced its highest-performing Pentium 4 processor ever, running at 2.2 gigahertz (GHz), or 2.2 billion cycles per second on the Great Wall this Tuesday.

According to the sponsor, it is a global performance at the same time either at Santa Clara or Beijing.

Built using Intel's most advanced manufacturing technologies, the processor sets the stage for a new class of high-performance PCs that power increasingly popular digital music, photography and video uses, as well the latest applications being developed for the workplace.

The 2.2 GHz milestone comes at a time when nearly 450 million people use PCs that run at 700 MHz or less.

"People are making digital media a regular part of their lives, and the new technology behind the Pentium 4 processor at 2.2 GHz makes those experiences better yet," said Louis Burns, vice president and general manager, Intel Desktop Platforms Group. "This holiday season brought another surge in sales of digital cameras, and as consumers use such devices to record and share their lives with others, the highest-performing PCs enable the best experiences."

Banks Try to Recover 100m from Yin Guang Xia Arm

By Xu Ying

Yin Guang Xia Industry, a company already tainted by scandal, has fresh financial worries as four mainland banks have filed suits to recover more than 100 million yuan in loans from a subsidiary.

Bank of China, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Pudong Development Bank and Bank of Communications all filed claims in court in Wuhu, Anhui province, seeking repayment of credit made to Wuhu Guang Xia, a company said to be involved in biotechnology.

Wuhu Guang Xia is 79% owned by Yin Guang Xia Industry, once considered to be one of the blue chips on the Shenzhen stock exchange.

The Bank of China has the biggest exposure to the Guang Xia subsidiary with 67 million yuan outstanding while the Industrial and Commercial Bank is trying to recover 14.53 million yuan. The Pudong Development Bank is seeking 12 million yuan while the Bank of Communications hopes to regain 11.8 million yuan.

Hyundai Motor to Build Plant

By Xu Ying

South Korea's top auto maker Hyundai Motor plans to set up its first assembly line in China, in a move to gain a foothold in the fast growing market.

Hyundai Motor chairman Chung Mong-koo told employees in a New Year's speech that focus this year should be on securing a presence in China which will emerge as the world's top car market.

"It is inevitable to build plants in the United States and China to explore new markets," Chung was quoted as saying.

The remark followed Hyundai's announced plan to build a factory in the United States, which is in the process of choosing the construction site.

A high ranking Hyundai official said the plant in China would either be in Beijing or near the city.

No one at the company could be reached immediately for comment.

Hyundai Motor posted record sales in 2001 by selling 1.6 million vehicles, up 9.3% from a year earlier.

Unicom Plays CDMA Roulette

Although China Unicom has gambled billions of dollars on CDMA project, things have run far from smoothly

By Yang Xiao

Launch

After nearly one-year's preparation, Unicom announced on Tuesday a small-scale launch of its long-awaited service using the CDMA standard in the world's top mobile market. Unicom has finally launched its 24 billion yuan cellular network.

"We're quite confident about the future of the CDMA market," China Unicom Group Chairman Yang Xianzu said at a launch ceremony in Beijing attended by high-level government officials.

"Our number of pre-registered users has already surpassed 500,000," he said.

Unicom will run a three-month trial, seeking suggestions from users about how to improve its quality and service before launching the service on a larger scale and introducing next-generation services later this year, Yang said.

Phone shops around Beijing were in confusion this week about how to get hold of CDMA phones. One manager of a Unicom-owned store in Beijing said on Monday she had no answer for shoppers interested in CDMA phones and service. "We just keep telling people, 'they'll be here soon'. But in fact we have no idea when it will be," Yao Zhenqi said.

Motorola, one of four CDMA phone producers in China, said on Tuesday it would ship two million phones initially.

Another concern for Unicom was failed "hand-offs", when a call is cut off as a user moves between cell sites built by different vendors, analysts said.

"A number of the networks, including the ones in Beijing and Shanghai, are experiencing that problem now," said Peter Lovelock, director of Beijing telecom consultancy MFC Insight.

Yang confirmed Unicom would charge standard rates for the new service rather than its usual 10% discount that helped it wrestle market share from rival China Mo-



While every Unicom CDMA outlet has not yet received the phone numbers, many people come to admire the exhibited CDMA phones

Photo by Chen Shuyi

bile for its GSM service.

"We will try to focus on high and middle-end users, and at the same time take care of the mass market," he said.

Gambles

China Unicom has always lived under the influence of China Mobile. When China Mobile gained 100 million customers throughout China last year, the second largest mobile phone service provider China Unicom only had 36 million customers. So they have had to gamble on the CDMA project.

The clock is ticking on the planned launch of what may turn out to be one of the biggest gambles in mobile telecom history: China Unicom's Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) network. For the operator, equipment vendors, and

handset makers, billions of dollars lie in the balance.

More than any other factor, market reaction to the new product, an alternative mobile technology to the GSM system that currently dominates China's mobile market, will determine the fate of CDMA in China.

Despite running a GSM network that now has over 36 million subscribers, Unicom announced it plans to launch the world's largest CDMA network. Unicom maintains that construction is on schedule for its \$1.2 billion 15 million capacity 2G CDMA network covering 300 major Chinese cities.

Troubles

Unicom has promoted the attractive concept of the "Green Mobile", which has encouraged

high-end users to spend 4,000 to 6,000 yuan on the new CDMA handset.

Professor Zhang Ping from Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications revealed that only the cellular providers' manufacturing technologies could decide radiation levels. "The rumors that CDMA handset has less radiations than GSM are unfounded." However the relevant Unicom manager sticks to the opposite view. They said they have examination proof.

Apart from the struggle of the "green idea", Unicom also faces a lawsuit from its customers. Liu Jun, a China Great wall CDMA customer is annoyed at Unicom's tough action and plans to sue. "Great Wall has a contract of selling customers to Unicom. The lat-

ter forced us to buy their expensive handsets with only a little compensation. If we don't, we will lose our phone numbers. It is a typical monopoly." China Great Wall CDMA has 500,000 customers in China, which Unicom has taken on as its basic customers. But the service charge is double that of Great Wall's, irrespective of the expensive handsets. The high cost CDMA project has also suffered criticism for mirroring the function of the GSM network without offering any new services.

Shares in Unicom's Hong Kong-listed unit China Unicom Ltd. closed down 2.81 percent on Tuesday at HK\$8.65. The company was hit by news of more competition in the mobile market as China detailed long-expected plans to grant two more licenses.

Sina and Sohu Spar over Online News

By Yang Xiao

Sina and Sohu have been waging a brutal war over profit margins since the end of 2001. Now the portals' fight has extended to advertisements where the profits lie. And the way of sinking advertisement contracts is to produce high quality news content.

Sohu: not digest, but real online news

Sohu's sights are aimed on Sina's online news service. For the fox (Sohu's logo), the grape tastes a bit sour. Sina's online news holds the key position in China. Last September a survey in China's largest IT newspaper revealed that 54.1% of netizens prefers Sina's news service, two to three times more than Sohu.

Sohu CEO Charles Zhang has to admit: "I consider that the gap started to widen in 1998. At that time I was busy coordinating relations among investors." Things have remained the same for three years.

Two months ago, at a senior meeting, Sohu decided it had to outdo Sina in news service. Then they will earn profits by the end of 2002.

Charles Zhang invited 28-year-old Kevin Li to take charge of developing online news. He made a deadline of six months for Sohu to beat Sina in news service. Subsequently every employee at the news center received a letter titled 'beat Sina'.

A slogan won't beat Sina by itself. Before Li became a supervisor news director, he spent much time with chief editors in a major Beijing newspaper. He finally made a decision, "Sohu must have its own point of view and voice. We will change the public image of online news. Not just digest, but human care, social responsibility and big event news." Will all these be enough to smash Sina? In any case, Sohu changed its news home page in December 2001.

Seesaw battle

One day later Sina retorted with a



speedy comeback. On December 14, Sina news center put forward several special topics. Sina vice-president Chen Tong supervises all news content departments. He says, "We are making some minor adjustments on our content. Too many words will give readers a bad feeling." Chen gathered nine senior editors to discuss the changes at Sohu. "We don't think they've had any success. We think they can't keep it up for a long time. We have established our position over three years, so far no one can keep up with us." Chen has a different view to Li, "Internet genius rests on speediness and live performance."

Sina's advantages stem from 1997. From 1998 Sina began continuously updating news every 12 hours. Then a lot of websites in China followed the lead of Sina. The War on Kosovo and bomb incident on the Chinese Embassy were a great impetus in helping them to increase page content.

To Sina and Sohu human resources

have become another battlefield. Zhong Zhan, a well-known netizen and former content vice director of Chinabyte joined Sohu. Many editors flow between the two portals.

Not only for news, but profit

Experts analyzed that the portals' profit comes from advertisement, and in China ads are rooted in news. "Sina will make even this June and make a profit next year. News will be charged with 70% to 80% of the task," says Chen. Sohu vowed it would make a profit. Sohu revealed its fiscal report on October 30; its net income was \$3.6 million, 70% sourced in ads. Sina revealed the next day that its income was \$6.1 million, over 90% hailing from ads.

Sohu considered providing other value-added services, such as text messages, e-mail, and e-commerce in the past two years. But customers only think highly of news, which explains why Sohu holds such a small share of the advertisement pie.

The first business-starting aiding projects for returning Chinese students was initiated in Zhongguancun

Start-up Funds Aid Returning Students Entrepreneurs

By Shan Jinliang

Twenty-six enterprises established by returning Chinese students were awarded an overall start-up fund of 2.36 million yuan by Zhongguancun Science Park in the Christmas period.

Liu Zhihua, vice-mayor and director of the Administrative Committee of Zhongguancun, awarded the selected 26 companies in the ceremony held at Jade Palace Hotel. The 26 companies, chosen from 70 that applied for the fund since this August, all possess excellent projects. Ranging from electronic information, biology engineering, new energy, high-efficient agriculture and software development, most of the projects own their intellectual property and high technology contents and show promising prospects, said the committee.

"The development of the companies should not depend on the government but the market, what the government can offer is a safe business environment and sincere service," the director noted. Therefore, as part of the returning overseas talents business-starting funds, the capital mainly offers a leading function, said Liu. He hoped the heads of the 26 companies would have their names engraved on a marble wall in the Oriental Square, the honor reserved for successful entrepreneurs in the park.

"I have got a great lot of support from the government and am surprised to see my company develop in such high speed," said Lu Taiwei, founder of Beijing Three-dimension World technology, one of the aided companies in his speech. He thought some of the Zhongguancun office procedures are more efficient than those of the U.S. "Beijing software environment is the biggest attraction for my investment here," said Li Zhaoren, another returning overseas business representative.

Over 1,000 returning talents have set up more than 550 companies since the park built its overseas talents serving system in June 2000. The system has received 4,500 overseas students for consultation, 2,032 of whom have expressed their intention to open businesses in the park this year.

Way Paved for International Accounting Firms

By Jiang Zhong

Companies that will be listed on the Chinese A share market after April 1 should have their supplemented financial report audited by international accounting institutes before they issue their stocks on the market for the first time, according to the regulations on supplemented auditing enacted by the China Security Regulatory Commission (CSRC) on the last day of 2001. The listed A share companies that applied for recollection of funds after January 1 should both supply the same supplement financial report.

Launch of this auditing regu-

lation reflects China's WTO membership commitments and the resolution to intensify its supervisory capacity in the domestic stock market.

"The CSRC expects to enhance its supervision capacity through the new regulation," said Jing Yiqing, partner of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, "Transparency and truthfulness of the information revealed in the supplement financial report will be improved after the participation of the third party (the international accounting agencies; the other two parties refer to the CSRC and the domestic accounting agencies). This valu-

able information will be useful for the investors to protect their rights and the CSRC to supervise the stock market."

Clients of the international accounting agencies in Beijing are mostly big enterprises at present, but after the launch of the regulation medium or small clients will be present in their operation.

"Sometimes these enterprises will not pay as much as a big company. However the quality of our auditing results and the value of the information will not be compromised," Jing said, "Good credit of the clients has a stake in our client-selection principle. We only

receive the job from a client with integrity."

This supplemented auditing system will undoubtedly bring huge profit to joint venture accounting firms in China. It was estimated that the unexpected income of these accounting firms would amount to 200 million yuan annually.

"That's good news for international accounting agencies in China," Jing continued, "But the income might not increase so much, because it's impossible for a creditable international accounting agency to accept all applications from various companies. Our

client-selection principle will cut the number of companies that will list in the stock market."

China's auditing industry has made great progress during the past few years; most of the accounting agencies can supply high quality auditing reports to the investors and supervisors of the Chinese stock market. However, inevitably, some agencies supplied fraudulent information in their auditing reports, which disturbs the order of the stock market and infringe upon the investors' rights. The international accounting agencies' participation will for sure improve conditions.

ETS Triggers China's English Training Market

By Xiao Rong

China's TOEFL or GRE testers may benefit from America's Educational English Testing Service (ETS) as it enters the country's English language training market.

ETS announced in Beijing yesterday the cooperation of its ETS Technologies and Tide Time New Media Group (TTNMG) in the field of English language training. TTNMG has been authorized by ETS Technologies to promote its "E-rater", an automatic assessment system for English papers.

"China boasts the largest education market in the world. To serve students of the world, including those in China, will be one of the main targets of ETS in the future," said Mr. Kirson E. Herbert, executive president of International Promotion Affairs of ETS.

New Oriental Group, China's leading English training organization, remained confident in the face of future competition however.

"It's inevitable for ETS to come to China and we think it's a driving force for the further development of our school. Anyway, the advantages of ETS are its exam papers while we boast strong educational beliefs. So ETS will still take a long time to grow accustomed to China's local conditions," Hu Min, president of Beijing New Oriental School, told the Beijing Today reporter.

Students of New Oriental School expressed favorable opinions on its advantages while showing curiosity towards ETS's arrival in China.

"I think it's a good thing for ETS to compete with New Oriental School and other domestic training organizations. At least we as consumers can enjoy better educational service and resources," said a TOEFL student at New Oriental.

Ping An & DKV Launches New Insurance Products

By Zhao Hongyi

Ping An Insurance Company of China has introduced a number of new health insurance products from the New Year, indicating a concrete step in Chinese and foreign cooperation after the country's entry to WTO.

New products include packages specifically designed for men, women, children and senior citizens. Packaged with attractive names like evergreen trees, ivy, carnation, lily flowers, pistachio, the products cover the largest number of illness categories to this day in China, and promise to offer the insured annual bonuses based on the performance of the company.

Ping An launched its new products in Beijing on January 9. In the first three working days after New Year, 5,000 insurance packages under the name of evergreen trees (for men) and carnation (for women) sold with a revenue over 8 million yuan all over China, according to Mr. Zhang Jianmin, vice president of Ping An Insurance Group charging of life insurance products development.

Ping An designed the new products under the help of their partner, Deutsche Krankenversicherung AG, DKV, the No.1 private medical insurer from Germany. DKV, a long-term player in the industry, has been in cooperation with Ping An in product design and risk management for five years.

Experts believe great room exists for foreign insurance players to cooperate with their Chinese partners both in market access and exploration.

Ms. Li Jing, public affairs director of Ping An, told Beijing Today that her company will introduce the other mentioned products later this year.



Photo by Zhuang Jian



Photo by Liu Yu

Cui Min demonstrates her customs cleared documents for the importing of cars behind her

New Year Brings Excitement to Car Market

By Zhao Hongyi

Cui Min, a customs clearer of Tianjin Mengjun Auto Trading Co., hadn't expected to be the focus of media when she went to the Tianjin Customs Clearance Hall on the early morning of January 4, 2002, the first working day of the New Year.

She went there that morning to clear customs procedures for the 26 Opel Omega and 20 Opel Zafira imported by her company.

She was met by hundreds of waiting reporters and cameramen from Beijing and Tianjin because her cars were the first autos imported after the New Year when China started adopting newly lowered imported tariffs.

Market access provokes consumer interest

As China promised to WTO, it will lower car import tariffs from 2001's 70-80% to 25%, passenger buses 45-65% to 25% and trucks 30-50% to 20-30%, after becoming a former member of the organization, starting from the beginning of 2002.

Furthermore, China also promised to gradually



More than 6,000 cars, mostly of Japanese made, parked in the tariff free zone in Tianjin, due to high importing tariffs

Photo by Mao Qian

diminish the import quotas previously imposed, phasing them out completely by the year 2006. In 2002, China will grant a total auto import quota of \$6 billion, while the country's total imports in 2000 amounted to only \$1.155 billion.

On the other side, domestic consumers have long awaited affordable autos, whether imported or domestically made, considering the high prices currently on the market.

In the three days of January 4, 5, and 6, 803 cars were cleared, four times the amount of last December, Hu Genqiang, director of the Tianjin Customs Clearance Office told reporters.

Price war has already started

At present, Tianjin Dahatsu, Zhejiang's Geely and Anhui's Chery have started lowering their prices. Joining them are Citroen-Fukang, Hainan Mazda, Jiangling Transit (GM) and Sichuan Toyota minivan, while Changchun's Jetta and Shanghai's Santana are still at the 'wait and see' stage.

But they have not been lying idle. New models like Shanghai Volkswagen's Polo, Changchun Volkswagen's Bora, Citroen-Fukang's Picasso will be launched later this year. Guangzhou Honda and Tianjin Dahatsu are also preparing new models.

Market opening benefits all

"It indicates that a huge potential market for cars exists out there, since great interest has been expounded on the issue. The rest is how you manage it," said Jia Xinguang, senior research fellow at the State Auto Industry Research Institute.

"China's car market today is just the same as the TV and refrigerator markets in the early 1980s.

"China is a huge populated market as well as a manufacturing machine. Success is only possible by establishing roots in the market by moving manufacturing assemblies and bases here before enlarging the market share," said Mr. Jia.

Government Clarifies Five Categories of Personnel From Transferring

By Zhao Hongyi

The Chinese government has kept some basic restrictions while liberalizing the country's human resources market.

The Ministry of Personnel and State Administration of Industries and Commerce listed five categories of human resources forbidden from relinquishing their current posts.

The five categories include technical and managing personnel in the national and provincial key science and technological research projects, volunteers dispatched by governments to Xinjiang and Tibet for assistance that have not yet finished their terms, personnel involved in intelligence work relating to national security and safety, personnel involved in illegal and discipline violation activities and under investigation, and other personnel on the special posts defined by laws and regulations from leaving their posts within the contract time.

Capital Seeks Talent Beyond Great Wall

By Jiang Zhong

Beijing is to recruit graduates of 26 disciplines from other provinces this year. Beijing Personnel Bureau announced recently.

The disciplines include economics, the science of law, civil engineering, electronic information, electronic engineering, English, clinical medicine, business administration, enterprise administration, marketing, human resource management, Chinese language & literature, philosophy, mechanical design & manufacturing, mechanical manufacturing techniques and manufacturing equipment, mechanical & electronic engineering, fireproofing

engineering, curative science, nursing, biological pharmaceuticals, and four mainstream college disciplines for teacher training including mathematics, English, Chinese, physics and fine arts.

The personnel bureau also issued the list of the target schools from which Beijing will recruit the graduates. 288 schools from 27 provinces outside Beijing were included in the list.

Zhao Yubin, director of the University and College Graduates Employment Department of the personnel bureau, said that the 288 schools include the colleges and universities sponsored by the central ministries

and commissions.

Zhao also said that local graduates from Beijing should be given priority over those from other provinces when Beijing enterprises consider recruiting college graduates. The number of graduates from outside the capital would not be decided until April or May of this year.

As to how the 26 disciplines were selected, Zhao said that the decision was made according to an analysis of the contradiction between the supply of graduates and the demand from enterprises. The change in demand reflects the WTO-oriented transformation the Chinese enterprises are currently undergoing.

New Rules Open Door to Foreign Securities Brokerages

By Jiang Zhong

Foreign institutions will be allowed to set up jointly operated brokerage firms after March 1, according to the Stock Firm Management Regulations issued by the China Security Regulatory Commission (CSRC) on January 7.

The operation of the jointly operated brokerages and the stocks held by the foreign party should follow the related laws and regulations of the CSRC, according to the Regulations.

The domestic brokerages will also be allowed to set up or buy shares of brokerage firms overseas.

Overseas Exhibitors Rush to Book Fair

By Zhao Hongyi

The Beijing International Books Fair (BIBF) has become a popular place both for exhibitors and visitors.

The ninth BIBF, scheduled for May 24-28, has become a top event for traders in the industry. A total of 959 book exhibition booths have been reserved, according to sources from National Books Import & Export (Group) Corporation, the organizer of the fair.

"As to the audio-video products exhibition section, we prepared more than 70 booth spaces and half of those have been booked out," Mr. Yu Ming, director of the organizing committee told Beijing Today over the telephone.

"Special space has been prepared for Internet publication exhibitors," said Yu.

So far this year, famous publishers like Random House, Thompson Publishing, John Wiley & Sons Inc, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press and BBC.

Since the 1990s, BIBF established a platform for books and publication copyright transactions. Total transaction volume on the 8th fair alone, held in the year 2000, reached 6,000. Today, copyright transactions have become the largest part of the fair.

"Foreign exhibitors have also constituted an important part of the fair, showing their interest in exploring China's publication market," said Mr. Ge Ning, from the public affairs office of the organizing committee.

Minister Urges Four Types of Personnel Training

By Zhao Hongyi

China needs professional personnel with an education and background in finance, information, world trade and hi-technology, said Zhang Xuezhong, minister of personnel, at a ministry internal working seminar held January 4 in Beijing.

Zhang said China will develop a science and technology research team consisting mainly of post-doctor talent, improve the currently existing talent recruitment practice and regulations, increase recruitment from abroad and encourage overseas Chinese students to return, develop a solid team of scientists for hi-tech agriculture development, industrialization and marketization of agricultural products.

According to statistics, the allocation of labor in China's agriculture, industries and service sector has reached a certain balance, with percentages of 4.2%, 24.3% and 71.5% respectively.

Director of Investigation Bureau Jailed

By Sun Ming

A high-ranking official in the General Administration of Customs was sentenced for a prison term for 11 years this week on bribery charges.

Wang Liwei, former vice-director of the investigation bureau of the administration had been in charge of reconnaissance work.

Taking advantage of his position and power, Wang aided two companies in 1996, one in its smuggling activities, and the other in an investigation into its smuggling activities, in return for payoffs. With the money, he secretly bought a car and two new apartments in Beijing.

However even though Wang bought the car in the name of a relative, the purchase attracted the attention of his department, and in December 2000, the supervision department of the General Administration of Customs reported their suspicions to the Dongcheng Procuratorate.

At that time, Wang had been transferred to Taiyuan Customs but actually remained in Beijing under the pretext of poor health. According to the Dongcheng Procuratorate, they had to be very careful in the in-

vestigation as Wang had many years' experience in the field of reconnaissance and anti-reconnaissance.

For a long period, only a few people in the administration knew he was under investigation. Wang himself admitted that he was stunned when he was suddenly arrested.

Prosecutor Qian Liansheng said interrogating Wang was also very difficult. As a former vice-director of the investigation bureau, Wang was familiar with the strategies used by investigators and knew how to take cues from their words and facial expressions.

Wang confessed at last when the investigators asked about the apartment in Changping. This had been a so closely guarded secret that not even his wife had known about it.

Wang said that as an official in customs, he had to face many temptations every day.

"The profits of smuggling are so considerable that smugglers were happy to invest large quantities of capital to ensure my cooperation," he said, "I once refused bribes, but I couldn't bear the temptation continually. I knew that I would get into trouble sooner or later."



Photo by Wang Fei

Locals Hire Foreign Tutors

By Ivy Zhang

"I will start teaching twins aged 15 in the near future. That should be interesting, as they don't speak much English," says Andrew Carson, 21, a junior majoring in Criminal Justice at Brockport University, New York and now a participant in a Chinese language program at Beijing Normal University. He was very excited about the prospect of teaching English to the twins and sharing his knowledge about law and politics.

Andy is one of 50,000 plus foreign students who came to China in 2001. That figure is the highest ever. Meanwhile, there is a great demand for native English teachers in Beijing, which creates more employment opportunities for foreigners and enables them to better understand China.

Andy's extra-curriculum agenda looks tight. In addition to making some extra money by teaching a class of children, Andy has already taken a couple of sessions with a 15-year-old Chinese girl called Lulu.

Lulu's English is quite good. She just wants to practice by chatting with some native speakers. Andy is her third tutor, or chatting partner to be precise.

"One day last October, when I was skateboarding on campus, a gentleman approached me and asked if I wanted to teach English," Andy said, "and I agreed."

The man worked for a local tutoring agency that

locates potential foreign tutors. Arranged by the company, Andy chats with Lulu for 2 hours every Saturday afternoon.

"Andy is very nice. We talk about our own stories and encounter no communication problems," says Lulu. "It's fun that I'm exposed to American culture while improving my English listening and speaking ability."

Lulu's parents fully support their daughter's interaction with an English-speaking tutor, though it means an extra burden on the family's budget.

"200 yuan every week is indeed a big expense for a common family like us," Lulu's mother, Zhang Shurong, an employee at Beijing Telecom, said. "But it's worth the money. My husband and I can't speak English. We want to create a good environment for our daughter to learn English well."

Chinese families like Lulu's, well-paid employees working for foreign companies, language training centers and business organizations are the main sources of customers for the tutoring agency.

The pay of foreign tutors is usually much higher than that of locals doing similar work. "Foreign tutors are paid 100 to 300 yuan per hour, while Chinese students can only get 25 or 30 yuan," says a marketing specialist at www.jiajiao.org, an education website with some 5,000 college students on their database who do tutoring work.



Diego Azubel mid-expedition in Ningxia, Northwest China

Great Adventure on Great Wall

By Su Wei

Diego Azubel is the first Argentinian to hike the length of the Great Wall, from Jiayu Pass in Gansu Province to Shanhai Pass on the Bohai Gulf.

He says all most foreigners know about the Great Wall is that it is in China and can be seen from space. Even Diego himself was under the impression until he started out on his expedition that it was simply one long wall. "I did not know that there are many parts of the Great Wall," he says.

During his adventure, he came to learn about the people lived along the Great Wall. "Language is not a problem for us to communicate. With gestures we can understand each other!" He was happy to encounter the farmers and shepherds and they often invited him to their homes.

Diego says he met no bad people during his journey. "Everyone is good. I am not worried about people." Among the photos he took along the way, is one of an old lady in black coat, a young woman making noodles, drum performers during the Spring Festival and shepherds with long-stemmed pipes.

He was never afraid of getting lost, though sometimes he spent two or three hours trying to find ways to follow the wall through the mountains. "The shepherds, especially the old shepherds know the way."

Although he experienced severe



Keeping physiotherapy at International SOS

weather and suffered several falls, he never thought of giving up. On one particularly tough day near Zhang Jiakou, he relates, "It was windy and raining. There was no path, just rocks..." But when he suddenly saw a shepherd with his sheep and goats waving to him, shouting "Ni hao, peng you! Ni shi na di fang de peng you? (Hello friend, where did you come from?)" he felt, "everything is nice again!"

He kept walking with strong faith in his luck and an undying eagerness to see the next scene. "The deserts near Yulin, Shanxi Province, the land of towers in Gubeikou, the big sunflowers...It is impossible to say the scenes in words so I took the photos!"

However, he had to pause to rest for a day or so, in deference to his aching legs. "Sometimes my legs tell me that I am too tired to walk, but my heart tells me to keep going. So I have to make a balance," he said with a smile. Diego said he had acupuncture when he arrived at cities to re-

lieve the pain in his legs.

When he was in the vicinity of Beijing, he visited International SOS for some physiotherapy. "Sheilagh Anderson, the physiotherapist there did some massage for me and stretched my legs. She is really good!"

Diego was also thankful and happy to be accompanied by friends and relatives during some sections of his walk. Mark Jackson, Operations Manager, Medical Services of International SOS and Rodrigo Azubel, Diego's brother joined him for the last section to Shanhai Pass. Refreshed by this company, Diego felt his heart become stronger. "My mind was no longer tired and the pain of the legs disappeared."

An exhibition of photos Diego took during his journey will open Monday at the Argentinian Embassy in Beijing, and the following week he plans to return to some sections of the Great Wall to take more photos for a planned book. He hopes that both his book and the exhibition will allow more people, especially westerners, to know more about the Great Wall.

Of his decision to revisit the wall to take more photos, Diego says "It is impossible for me to wait for the best moment to take photos in some of those places. I just have to keep walking!"

"My Chinese name is Ma Pengfei, and I like to say Ma Pengfei fei guo Changcheng." (Diego is flying over the Great Wall.)

New Year Dress



Photo by Chen Shuyi

The current trend of wearing clothing modeled on traditional Chinese outfits is no recent fad. The dress code at the APEC Shanghai summit last October just added fuel to the fire. After careful calculation and strict budgeting, vogue chasers have turned away from big brands in luxury shopping centers, to seek out smaller fashion-sensitive workshops and tailor's scattered around the city, according to those in the know.

The difference this year is that, because of APEC, more and more men are expected to share the zeal for Chinese costumes with women.

"Many male customers come to our store, and ask whether we have the style favored by the APEC leaders," says Li Damei of Wuyuwu Workshop, near the Yonghegong (Lama Temple). Wuyuwu used to make outfits only for

women. The owner, a fine arts graduate, designs all the products himself, and his accurate predictions about the market have reaped him satisfying rewards.

One merit of Wuyuwu is that they have abundant fabrics. Apart from traditional brocade with more than 50 patterns, cotton, linen, and synthetic textile, Wuyuwu also stocks imported materials from Japan and Korea. The average price for an order is 300 yuan, half the price of some better-known brands at the big shopping centers.

Yiya is a tailor shop not far from Wuyuwu. The decor and the clothes hanging in Yiya seem more conservative than Wuyuwu. Red brocade with a black circular flower design is the top seller here. In general, Chinese style clothes last year didn't sell as well as the previous year, according to Fu Aihua, the tailor at Yiya. "Maybe too many people wear similar designs with similar fabric. The trend has become a little vulgar". She says that foreigners who come into her shop prefer the dark color brocade, while Chinese customers, mostly in their 20s and 30s, choose the opposite.

The reporter encountered two loyal followers of Chinese style clothing at Yiya, and probably Kang Xueli from

PingAn Insurance would not agree with Fu's comment about the trend becoming "vulgar". She was wearing traditional Chinese style clothing long before the trend took off. The off-the-rack clothes at shopping centers did not always fit her well, and given the usually hefty price tags, going to a tailor became the only reasonable choice.

Li Mingen inherited a love for tradition from her father, who used to be involved in the production of the TV series *The Three Kingdoms*. She says all her family members are also fond of Chinese style clothes. Since her father is too old now to make clothes for the family by himself, Li is a frequent visitor to the tailors.

Traditional Chinese elements offer abundant choices if you are seeking a "new look". We politely suggest you go and discover a tailor near your home, and put your interpretation of Chinese tradition into your outfit. According to the sages: When in Rome, do as the Romans do. Then all will be well.

Wuyuwu(物语屋): 26 Yonghegong Street, Dongcheng District (东城区雍和宫大街26号)

Yiya(伊雅): 147 Yonghegong Street, Dongcheng District (东城区雍和宫大街147号)

"White House" Burns Down

By Ivy Zhang

The dome-shaped hall of Laitai flower market in east Chaoyang District, nicknamed "the White House" due to its resemblance to that well known residence in Washington DC burnt down this week. Three people died and one was injured in the incident.

The fire broke out around 11:30 a.m. Monday, in a bar named "shepherd" and spread immediately to the adjacent transaction center in the north of the Laitai flower market, blanketing the area in thick black smoke.

Five fire brigades dispatched 24 fire trucks and some 150 fire fighters to the site, and it took them two hours to extinguish the fire, by which time all that remained of the structure were the steel beams. The economic loss caused by the fire is estimated at 700,000 yuan, according to Li Chao, office manager of Laitai Flower Company.

The cause of the fire has not yet been confirmed, but initial investigations suggest a short circuit triggered the blaze. The three people who died and the one injured in the fire were all employees of the bar.

The Laitai auction hall, morning market and Laitai flower street were not damaged and remain open in the wake of the fire, however a long-planned "horticulture performance week" has had to be postponed.



Photo by Cheng Tieliang

Business Slow for Men's Beauty Parlor

By Chen Ying

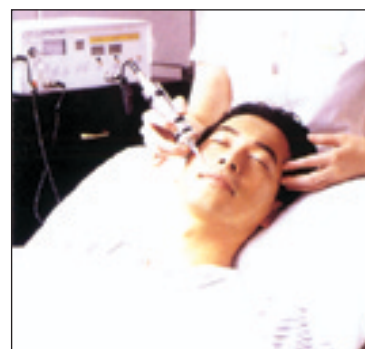
Beijing's first beauty parlor for men has been open now for over three months. But business is not yet booming in the way the owner anticipated.

Located at the western end of the north third ring road, Beijing Feifan Kongjian Men's Health Club offers beauty services exclusively to men. "One of my clients was driven away from a traditional beauty parlor, because many people think they are the territory of women. Also many men may feel embarrassed to receive such services surrounded by women. That's why we opened this parlor", says manager Wu Qiang.

In Beijing, most men still abide by the traditional idea that real men don't care about their complexion. They would rather spend money buying clothes than spending several hours in a beauty parlor whitening their faces. For some, a man visiting a beauty parlor is as unacceptable a concept as a woman smoking!

But such views are gradually changing. Performers and men working in the field of public relations for example are beginning to pay more attention to their looks. They are the main source of customers for the beauty parlor, but business is still slow, despite the advanced equipment and imported men's make-up on offer.

Perhaps the 120 yuan per visit price tag is a factor, but Wu remains optimistic. "Men still care about health more than beauty. Now it is time to cultivate more potential customers", he says.



Defeated Dignity

Employee, 30, loses nation's first sexual harassment case

By Ivy Zhang

The first sexual harassment case in Chinese history ended in defeat for the plaintiff on December 23, 2001, after a two-month civil court hearing. The complaint was doubly unique as China has no law on sexual harassment.

In announcing its decision, Lianhu District People's Court cited lack of evidence. The accuser, identified only as Ms. Tong, appealed to Xi'an Intermediate People's Court a week later.

Tong, a 30-year-old state company employee, alleged she had been subjected to unwanted touching by her manager on several occasions since 1994. During these advances, she said, he had promised her a good job and also asked her to accompany him to a hotel room.

Tong's boss was reprimanded for his behavior, but the court heard he then made things difficult for her at work, withholding a bonus and allowances. Tong decided to stay at home — and filed a petition with the court in July 2001. Despite her colleague's entreaties, Tong's refusal to withdraw the complaint saw her work unit effectively terminate her employment.

In rejecting her petition, the court found Tong had failed to present sufficient evidence to prove sexual harassment. "It is difficult to obtain evidence," said Tong's lawyer Ma Qiang. He said he had presented one piece of direct evidence and eight pieces of indirect evidence at the hearing.

The direct evidence came from a colleague who had heard Tong saying, "You can't do that". But the court failed to recognize this as direct evidence, saying the witness was outside the office and therefore unable to know what was really happening without stepping inside.

The boss' voice was never heard and so there was no way of knowing to whom Tong was talking. In her appeal, Tong claims the court's evaluation of her evidence is incorrect. For evidence cited to reflect the facts, she says, the court's request for proof of every detail is too rigid.

Unjust or uncertain? What should Chinese law provide to protect a woman's rights in the workplace? And what should a woman do to protect those rights?

Ma Yinan, professor, civil law, Beijing University Law School

The fact that Tong's case was accepted and heard demonstrates the court recognizes and values the issue of sexual harassment. The nature of sexual harassment is the infringement of an individual's right to personal dignity, which falls within the scope of civil law in China.

In the current legal framework, there are regulations about people's specific rights such as a citizen's reputation, life, health and image. However, a person's right to personal dignity is not defined in writing.

I think the court's ruling in Tong's case is appropriate. Without strong evidence, you can't sentence anyone to liability.

For the prospects of this case in a higher court trial, I'm afraid the chances of Tong winning are low unless she can present more evidence like a video tape or tape recording taken without intent to entrapment.

I personally don't agree with the idea that the law is omnipotent. Nor do I agree with the enactment of domestic violence or sexual harassment laws.

Legislation is meant to create sound social order. I have many doubts about the maturity of legislative conditions in China now. I think regulations on such issues as sexual harassment should be appended to the current civil law practices and more judicial explanations provided as well. In this way, a victim like Tong is able to get mental compensation.

Andrew L. Carson, Criminal Justice major, Brockport University, New York and Beijing Normal University language student

It is good to know this case at least made it to trial. It shows that although there are no sexual harassments laws in China, the government is at least willing to hear the case.

I think it would be right for Ms. Tong to bring this to a higher court. Although the piece of direct evidence seems inadequate to me. The fact that the words "You can't do this" were heard from the boss's office does not prove much. The other employee

that heard these remarks was not in the room and did not witness to whom Ms. Tang was speaking.

What should be seriously looked into though is what occurred after this fact. Ms. Tong's boss then made things difficult for her by withholding bonuses and allowances.

This sort of behavior is what a person committing the act of sexual harassment does to keep control over their victim. By the boss doing this, it shows that he feels he can punish or reward her for her actions that are not involved with business but rather of a sexual nature.

I think sexual harassment legislation is necessary in China but it should be researched before this legislation comes into place. In America, sexual harassment legislation has become out of control to where you can be charged for simply looking at somebody incorrectly when in fact you were not doing that at all.

The fact that there is no law for this also confuses me. How can this be brought to court if there is no law against it? I am very interested in the eight pieces of indirect evidence. I can't write much more because I feel that I am lacking information about the case.

Lu Jianping, legal translator, Asia Information Associates, Shanghai

The court decision comes as no surprise. It is just the typical legal bullet shooting down a tender voice for justice. And it amounts to no more than a judicial failure that pales before the other countless told or untold cases.

What the court has delivered is a consistent, face-saving assurance for China's decision-making, and now sneering, toasting males.

Attributing the non-delivery of justice to the non-existence of a law is a naive and cowardly excuse. China, by adoption a Roman law country, is adept at codifying laws.

The question is how laws that purport to deliver justice can be reengineered, reinterpreted — or just plain ignored — to tip the scales towards a selected few. When a law is touted as a tool to rule and

regulate, rather than to protect the weak and the disadvantaged, small wonder justice falls through. For now, and possibly, far into the future.

Consider, for example, our insolvency law, labor law, securities law, women and children protection law and a host of others. This nation actually sits on a pile of laws, which are often, willingly or unwillingly, ill devised or executed.

Human dignity, civil rights and gender equality need to be upheld and respected in both letter and spirit. Justice needs to be delivered on promise and universally. Or society will fracture and it will all end up in turmoil.

Indeed, a battle needs to be fought, ardently, enduringly and collectively. Both in court and beyond.

Li Ying, patent attorney, Patent and Trademark Law Office of China Council for Promotion of International Trade

Sexual harassment is an embarrassing situation that has been met by many females, even from when they are teenagers.

Most of the time, the victims do not dare to speak out their anger toward the offenders because being subjected to unwanted touching or the like are conventionally considered shameful experiences for a female.

Also, just as in this case, the victims usually do not have irrefutable evidence to indicate the offender's actions. Thus, they just keep it as a horrible secret in the heart and try to forget it over time.

Taking advantage of this mentality, almost all offenders can go ahead with their dirty deeds without being punished. The ridiculous thing is that due to the rigid requirements of evidence, even the court seems to be an ally of those offenders.

If this continues to be the case, there may be more sexual harassment cases in the future as the offender knows as long as he does not leave strong evidence, his behavior won't bring him any trouble. That's unfair. With more feasible and flexible legislation, I hope all women can lead a happy life, free of harassment.

SOUND BITES

"Afghanistan has been a failed state for too long and the whole world has paid the price — in the export of terror, the export of drugs and finally in the explosion of death and destruction on the streets of the USA. It is all in our interests that Afghanistan becomes a stable country, part of the international community once more."

— **Tony Blair, United Kingdom Prime Minister, speaking in Afghanistan**

"Pakistan rejects terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and is fully cooperating with the international coalition against terrorism. We are taking steps to check militants. We have to check militants from our society. We are taking steps in Pakistan to bring some degree of [normality] to introduce a tolerant society. All that is to be addressed. A final decision will be made when I address the nation in a few days."

— **General Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan president**

"We are grieving tremendously. I just lost my whole world, and I really don't know what to say right now. The only thing I'm willing to say is that my son gave us no indication of what he was going to do. He loved his country, and he was disgusted by what happened [on September 11]. He was an honors student. He was loved by many. That's all I can say."

— **Julia Bishop, whose 15-year-old son Charles, flew a Cessna plane into the 28th floor of a Tampa, Florida tower block**

"We are waiting to die. If food does not come, if the situation does not change, we will eat this (grass) until we die,"

— **Ghulam Raza, 42-year-old resident of Bonavash, north Afghanistan**

"The government in Harare (capital of Zimbabwe) has contempt for democracy and the rights of journalists. Now is a moment of truth for press freedom and for the international community's commitment to democracy in the region."

— **Aidan White, general secretary of the International Federation of Journalists**

"Not only here but Pakistanis in Pakistan and all over the world feel this is insulting and derogatory. President Bush is not the only offender. A lot of Pakistanis in the New York area have complained to me that government officials have been using the word."

— **Syed Adeeb, editor of the Washington-based Pakistan Times, concerning US President George Bush's use of the racially charged abbreviation "Pakis" in a recent lecture**

By Chen Ying

Miss University

Students vie to become image ambassadors

By Chen Ying

More than 2,000 students watched the final of a contest to select three image ambassadors for the University of Science and Technology Beijing (USTB) recently.

More than 100 undergraduate and postgraduate students had entered the contest as part of the school's upcoming 50th anniversary celebrations. The student union had invited a Beijing Costume Institute professional teacher to train the finalists in modeling etiquette before the final. Eight men and eight women competed at the campus Students Activity Center in three categories: etiquette, Internet and art.

Three sections made up the final: a self-introduction, a talent performance and finally, answering questions from a host about your chosen field. There were also three bonus awards: most photogenic, best demeanor and most popular.

The news captured media and public attention as some argued it amounted to little more than a campus beauty contest. Others questioned whether a university needs an image ambassador.

Student opinions follow:

Liu Siyang, student, University of Science and Technology Beijing, winner of best demeanor

I'm a freshman. And I'm confident in myself. I wanted to have



Sixteen participants enter the final of University of Science and Technology Beijing image ambassador contest

a try. I think I have the ability to represent USTB. The same as many of the participants, I feel it's a kind of test for me.

In fact, the winners weren't just beautiful girls and handsome boys. The winners were versatile. For instance, the winners of the Internet and Art sections must display academic expertise. Many participants didn't so much want to win the title as to take part in something interesting.

Chen Xi, student, University of Science and Technology Beijing, winner of Internet Ambassador

Originally I assumed the Internet Ambassador must be female. But the organizers said male would also be OK.

At USTB, I have hosted many activities. I even took a part-time job for Legend as a host promoting its new product in Shanghai. The company was satisfied with me.

When I finished work, my Legend colleagues said I would be better if I could polish my personal etiquette.

I knew there would be etiquette training for the finalists. I thought it would be useful to improve my hosting skills and personal qualities. So I took part in the Internet Ambassador contest.

In the final, students performed a particular talent. I played the guitar. Competitors also answered some questions in the field.

I think students are better

suited to represent a university. A university can select graduates as ambassadors. But that will involve some commercial aspects as those graduates will have taken jobs. People would consider it purely a business transaction if Tsinghua employed Charles Zhang [CEO of Sohu] as university Internet ambassador.

I wouldn't participate in an activity if it were just about beauty selection, let alone win the award for Internet Ambassador.

The image ambassador of a university should represent ordinary students. That's why I had the faith to participate.

I feel the competitors changed a lot through this activity, especially their confidence. I comforted a depressed participant who got nothing in the final that she should compare herself now to before she took part in the activity. She quickly became happy. We really made good friends, as well as gaining invaluable experience.

Gao Jie, student, Beijing Central Conservatory

The key is the content. How many parts make up the contest? What is the theme of the organizers? What angle do the organizers adopt? It can be acceptable if the event cares more about a collection of qualities rather than focusing on appearance. Otherwise, it will incite blame. Fortunately, this activity was suitable as it was successful and popular

in USTB.

I think it's advisable, but not necessary to hold similar activities in universities. It's a good booster for the university celebrations. It would be boring if everyone copies the idea at other universities.

Chen Huiying, student, Beijing University

Selecting students as ambassadors for a university is improper. But I can accept it. It's just an activity among students after all. It may differ from a traditional beauty contest. Students enjoy themselves through the activity.

An ambassador can't completely represent a university. Maybe the ambassador can function as one facet of the university. That's why USTB selected three different ambassadors.

I think some professors and scholars more properly represent a university's image. If there were some diplomatic events at Beijing University, the university would let Ji Xianlin [a famous professor] attend. In fact, many graduates qualify as image ambassadors for their own university. For example, Charles Zhang, as the CEO of Sohu, may be the most suitable person if Tsinghua really wants to select an image ambassador for the Internet.

These people are more suitable as ambassadors in some sense.

Troubled Times for Chinese Football

By Chen Ying

The investigation into match fixing in China's second division football league is in its final phase. Fans, the media, clubs and administrators are now awaiting the final decision of the China Football Association (CFA).

On January 5, the China Football Association (CFA) summoned the chairmen of the five clubs accused of involvement in match fixing in the last two rounds of the 2001 Second Division league series: Chengdu Wuniu, Mianyang Taiji, Jiangsu Shuntian, Zhejiang Lucheng and Changchun Yatai.

CFA vice-president Zhang Jilong said after the meeting that the Disciplinary Committee would deliver a report to the standing committee of the CFA before January 15. The standing committee will then determine whether these clubs can participate in the next season's games.

On January 6, another CFA vice-president, Yan Shiduo, expressed his views about the case on CCTV-1's 'Oriental Horizon'. "The CFA will definitely take some sort of action. Otherwise how could we face China's football fans? To do nothing would be an admission that the CFA can no longer manage professional football and can't keep the football clubs and referees in line," said Yan.

Earlier this week, the CFA unveiled its new regulations detailing penalties for match fixing. Meanwhile Xinhua News Agency reported that chairman of Zhejiang Lucheng Football Club, Song Weiping had provided the agency with a list of match referees alleged to have accepted bribes.

The list includes the names of the referees, the amount of money paid and the procedure for making the payments. Eight referees are alleged to be involved. Some accepted money before the games in question while others were paid after the match. Some referees forfeited their promised payment because they failed to help Lucheng win the match. The amounts paid to the referees ranged from 30 thousand yuan to 160 thousand yuan.



CFA vice-president, Yan Shiduo

Photo by Wei Tong

Along with a similar list provided by Guangzhou Geely, the total number of referees implicated in the match fixing scam has reached nine.

Rigged games and corrupt referees have long plagued Chinese football. In 1998, the CFA spent over a month investigating claims of match fixing between Chongqing Longxin and Shenyang Haishi. However no action was taken as the investigation failed to collect sufficient evidence.

Perhaps it is in view of that failure that the CFA is remaining low key about this investigation. "We'll absorb the lesson of the Chongqing Longxin and Shenyang Haishi case. We don't want to boast about what we will do. We just want to go quietly about our investigation. And I feel it has been effective this time," said Yan in the CCTV interview.

Goals Galore

In the penultimate-round of the 2001 Second Division, Chengdu Wuniu beat Mianyang Taiji by an incredible 11:2. The result meant that Chengdu Wuniu would have the chance to be promoted to the First Division in 2002, provided they won the last game against Jiangsu Shuntian and Changchun Yatai lost to Zhejiang Lucheng.

If Chengdu lost and Changchun won, the promotion would go to Changchun. If both Chengdu and Changchun won their final games, the team with the highest goal count would be promoted.

On the afternoon of October 6, 2001, the day of the last round of second division matches, the two games began at the same time. At half time, Chengdu had conceded one goal to Jiangsu, while the other match was tied 0:0.

However dramatic scenes took place

during the second half of both matches. Jiangsu Shuntian scored again in the 71st minute. But then Chengdu broke through the Jiangsu defense to score four times in the last 19 minutes. In the other game, the score stood at 3:0 in Changchun Yatai's favor at the 85th minute, when Zhejiang Lucheng delayed the game for four minutes because they were dissatisfied with the referee's decision over the third goal.

Then in the last four minutes of the game, Changchun Yatai piled on another three goals to win the game 6:0. The extraordinary result secured promotion to the first division for Changchun Yatai, the team having scored just one more goal than Chengdu Wuniu.

Too good to be true

The spectacular result was a little too much for most people to swallow. Song Weiping, chairman of Zhejiang Lucheng held a news conference after the match and expressed disappointment at his players having deliberately thrown the game. He fired five players on the spot.

In fact, in the penultimate round of the second division, another game also caused intense debate. Guangzhou Geely players left the ground before the game ended in protest at the referee's awarding of a third goal to opponent Shanghai Zhongyuan.

Soon after, board chairman of Guangzhou Geely Li Shufu announced Geely would quit the league because of the widespread corruption.

It is ironic that China's National Football Team qualified for the 2002 World Cup just one day after these controversial games took place. It seemed that Chinese football experienced its greatest moment of glory and shame at the same time.

CCTV-5's popular football program 'Soccer Night' broadcast a special issue about the two cases on October 12 last year.

In the program, Song Weiping threatened to reveal the extent to which the practice of match fixing had corrupted the second division, should the CFA



Referees may be facing red cards over corruption allegations.

Photo by Hu Jinxi

simply penalize the five teams involved without taking effective measures to address the problem of rigged games and referee corruption.

On October 16 last year, the CFA published the penalties handed to the five clubs. The 2002 registration qualifier was cancelled, and 61 of the players who participated in the three games were penalized.

The five clubs were ordered to complete reforms within three months and report the steps they had taken to the CFA before January 15, 2002.

On December 13, 2001, Song Weiping of Zhejiang Lucheng and Li Shufu of Guangzhou Geely gave a news conference in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, during which they disclosed details of their deals with certain referees in regard to the matches in question.

Two weeks later, Song published the confession of a referee, but withheld the man's name. The referee returned the 40 thousand yuan paid to him by the club.

That's the future we expect

Fixed games and corrupt referees have severely damaged the image of Chinese football, but what happened at

the end of last year made the blood of countless Chinese football fans boil.

It seemed that the CFA has no more pressing task than to overcome this inequity in China's football world. Until now, the CFA is still collecting proof and related material about these problems.

However it seems that it is prepared this time to do whatever is necessary to clean the game up. The battle has really begun to stamp out these illegal dealings between teams and referees.

The well-known CCTV football commentator Zhang Bin says the CFA now has a great opportunity to clean up Chinese football, particularly with the National Team qualifying for this year's World Cup.

In the CCTV-1 program broadcast on January 6, Yan Shiduo promised to millions of fans that the CFA would solve all these problems during 2002.

Many believe that eradicating corruption in Chinese football is more important than participating in the World Cup, however time is running out.

Both fans and the media keenly anticipate the day when football in China can be played under a clear blue sky.



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From December 31, 2001 to January 8, 2002, Beijing Today journalists Xia Lei and Wang Lin visited the cities of Kabul and Maydanskahr, in Afghanistan. They spoke to a variety of ordinary people there, seeking to gain a picture of daily life in that war-torn country.

Continued from page 1

Prosperous second hand car market

There are many cars in the city, which also comes as something of a surprise. Most of them are Japanese makes: Toyota, Nissan and Isuzu. The majority of these Japanese cars arrive in Afghanistan via Saudi Arabia. There are also many Volkswagen Beetles driven proudly around the streets, not the new model, but the original 1960's version. Russian cars can also be seen, patched and repaired many times but still in use, evoking memories of the invasion of the former Soviet Union in 1979.

A salesman at the biggest secondhand car market in the city told us the Japanese cars account for 90% of the market. Prices range from US\$3,500 to \$6,000, depending on the car's working condition and mileage. If you are wealthy, you can pick up a Toyota Jeep for \$10,000. For the less affluent, second hand Ladas sell for \$500. According to the salesman, 40% of the families in Kabul could afford to buy a car. He predicts prices will rise with the coming of peace and as people become better off.

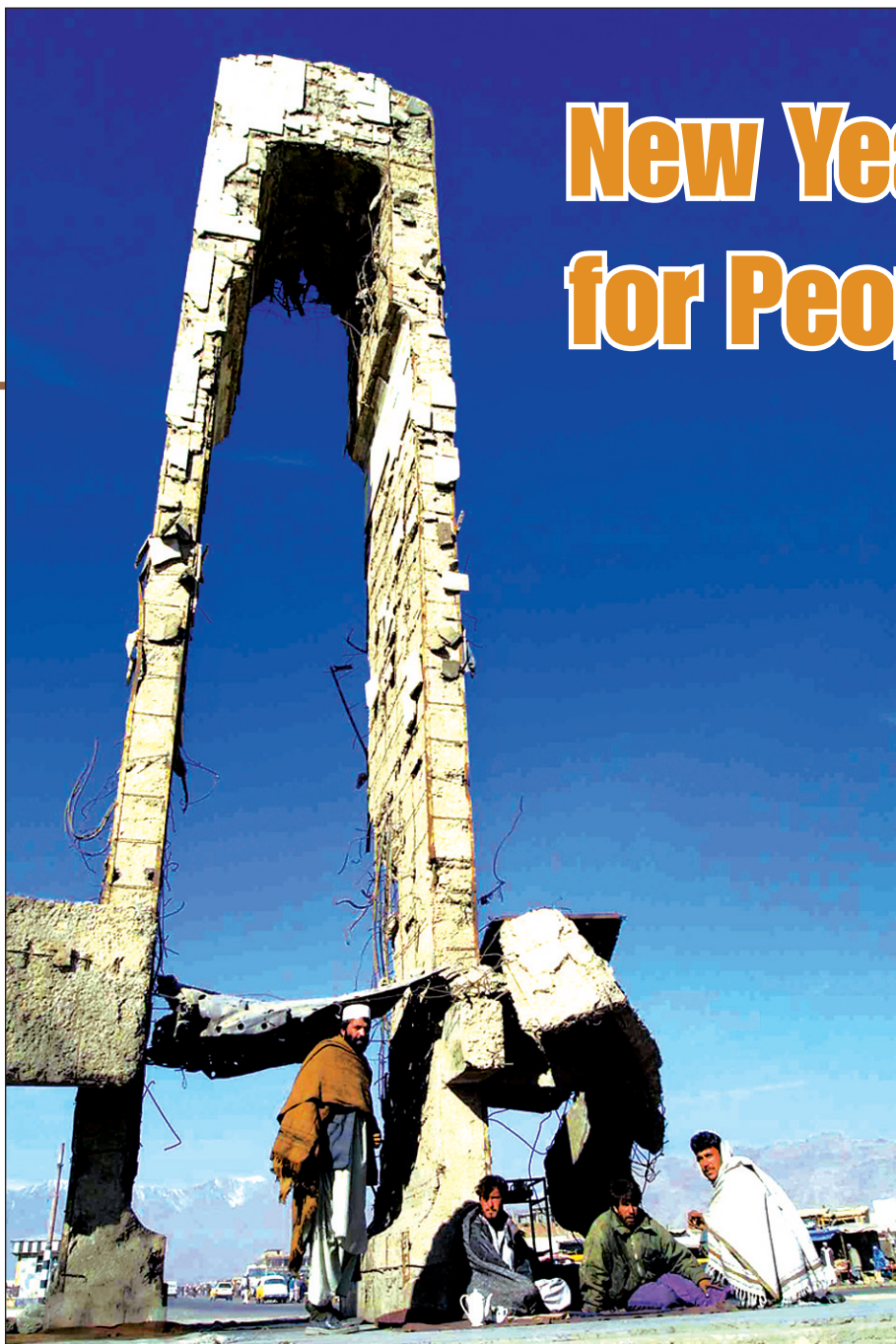
TVs, satellite dishes and VCD machines in hot demand

Besides cars, people here are also keen to buy TVs, satellite dishes and VCD machines. A street near a large mosque where there are many shops selling such goods is always crowded. As most of the shops are no more than ten square meters, the owners usually set their goods outside in the street. Most are imported from Japan, Malaysia and Thailand. There seem to be few TV sets and VCDs made in China, even though it is one of biggest producers of these machines.

Nan Garliar, a businessman selling TVs, satellite dishes and VCD machines says business is not bad. "I can sell ten sets of televisions per day, seven out of these ten buyers will also buy a satellite dish at the same time."

Garliar says he has visited China twice. He bought second hand TV sets in Gansu Province to sell here in Afghanistan. The average price he paid for the second hand TV sets was 220 yuan (about US\$26.50).

He hopes the Chinese Embassy here will resume issuing visas as soon as possible, so he can return to China and bring more Chinese products into the market. He obtained his visas for his previous visits from the Chinese consulate in Karachi, Pakistan.



Afghanis drink tea beside a ruined building
Photos by Wang Lin



Outdoor carpet sellers



Shop selling TV and other electrical appliances



A young girl at school



Boxing match at a club in Kabul



Newsstand in Kabul

Handmade carpet sells well in Kabul

Just opposite the Kabul Hotel where we are staying, there is a street occupied by carpet sellers. For one piece of carpet, one meter square, the seller is asking US\$120. Our interpreter told us that we could bargain by halving the price.

Most of the carpets are made in the southern part of the country. They are hand made and most of them are red with ancient central Asian style patterns. The seller buys these carpets cheaply directly from the makers in the rural areas and transports them here to sell at a markup of around 40%.

They look beautiful and durable. Our interpreter says his family has a carpet bought 35 years ago, but still looks like new, even after having been washed many times.

Musood, 19, is a carpet seller on the street. He comes originally from Fariab province, but now lives in Kabul. He says that it is always rich people buying his handmade carpets. Musood can earn 200,000 Afghani (about 8 dollars) per day, big money for most Afghani.

Girls resume study after five years at home

Alfat is the biggest school for girls

in Kabul. There are now 3,000 female students studying there. Although it is winter vacation in Afghanistan, they still have classes six days a week, from 9 to 12 o'clock.

According to headmaster Asmael Hasanzy, the school has 100 teachers, 98 of them female. "A student usually should pay 20,000 Afghani (a little less than US\$1) per month for tuition. We only charge 15% of the fee for girls from poor families, some of them can study here free of charge," he told us.

In one classroom, girls are studying English. "My name is Amar", "his name is Hasar," they read aloud, sit-

ting on the floor with no desks or chairs. There are 75 girls in this class. Some of them are from other provinces, as their parents believe the capital has the best teachers and schools in the country.

Soldiers from north keen for peace

On Jan. 3, 2002, we drove 60 kilometers southeast to Maydanskahr city in the province of Wardag. A unit of troops from the north guarded the city in a camp nearby.

Mir Abdullqum is the commander of this unit of 30 soldiers and 10 tanks. "Our duty is to monitor the security of the city and check passing vehicles. This is a strategic point which links the capital with other provinces in the west."

He says he has only been here for two weeks. Life here is all right for him, and people in the city are kind to the soldiers. However it is cold at night, he says, and they don't have enough coal to heat the living room in their camp.

Fahim is a tank driver. He is blind in one eye, the result of a hand grenade attack, and has sustained injuries on four other separate occasions.

"My wish is to be an ordinary worker after I am discharged from the army. I don't want to fight anymore, I hope I will fall in love with a girl and marry her."

Great day for boxers

On January 6, the sport of boxing officially resumed after an interruption of five years. It might seem hard to believe today, but boxing has an over 50-year history in Afghanistan, however it was banned by the Taliban.

At Marif Boxing Club in Kabul, more than 200 people crowd into the small stadium to enjoy their favorite sport. Boxers from two school teams are competing. They have no special uniforms and their gloves have seen better days, but what they lack in gear, they make up for in enthusiasm. Tamim is just 17 years old, but he is a good boxer with several years training in the city.

"I like Mike Tyson very much. He is very fast, he is very strong, he is very handsome", Tamim says: "I hope one day he could visit my country, so that I can meet him. Maybe box with him."

Akharty is the head of Marif Club. He told us, "I know that Beijing will host the 2008 Olympic Games. Members of my boxing club are young, aged between 10 and 18. I hope some of them can get the chance to compete in the Olympic Games in Beijing."

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Life Between Yin and Yang

By Miao Yajie

Russian writer Leo Tolstoy begins *Anna Karenina* with a great sentence: "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." If the word 'families' were replaced with 'life', the philosophy would still be tenable. Life in China from 1966 to 1976 to some people was too miserable to recall, and for junior and senior high school graduates in big cities who answered the call to 'go to live and work in the countryside', they lost more than the chance to further their studies.

Our hero today, Liu Jincheng, now chief physician at the Beijing Hospital of Chinese Medicine, was among the ten million students. However for Liu, misfortune turned out to be a rare opportunity. In the countryside where he was sent, Datong County, Shanxi province, there lived a very famous doctor of Chinese medicine. Following his teacher, Liu chose not only a career but also a balanced and healthy attitude towards life.

"Life can be interpreted by the theory of Chinese medicine, that is, the Yin and Yang theory. You lose in Yin, and gain in Yang. Nothing is lost as a whole," said Doctor Liu with a smile in his eyes.

One gains in yin, and loses in yang

Liu Jincheng went to work in Datong county at the end of 1968, when he had just finished senior high school. If it had not been for the movement, he would have gone to college that year. It was exactly ten years later that he was enrolled in the Capital Medical University among the first lucky few after the Cultural Revolution. Ten years of youth were spent in a poor mountain county serving as a 'barefoot doctor', which meant treating the peasants for free.

At first Liu learned western medicine, and because of his youth and passion, he soon mastered the basic skills, "For an appendix operation, I could stitch the incision in fifteen minutes at my fastest!" Liu recalled with some pride.

Then in 1969, Liu Jincheng began to study traditional Chinese medicine under the guidance of Li Kan, a very famous elderly doctor of Chinese medicine in the Datong area. Talking of his esteemed teacher, who initiated him into his career, Liu's voice was filled with respect.

"He could diagnose when he was going to die," Liu said. Both his teacher and Liu could tell from his teacher's appearance that he had a problem with his liver, however due to lack of advanced medical equipment, he couldn't judge what type of hepatitis he was suffering from. He lived as if he didn't have the disease. Then one day he asked his wife to make new cloth for him, adding that he didn't have much time left.

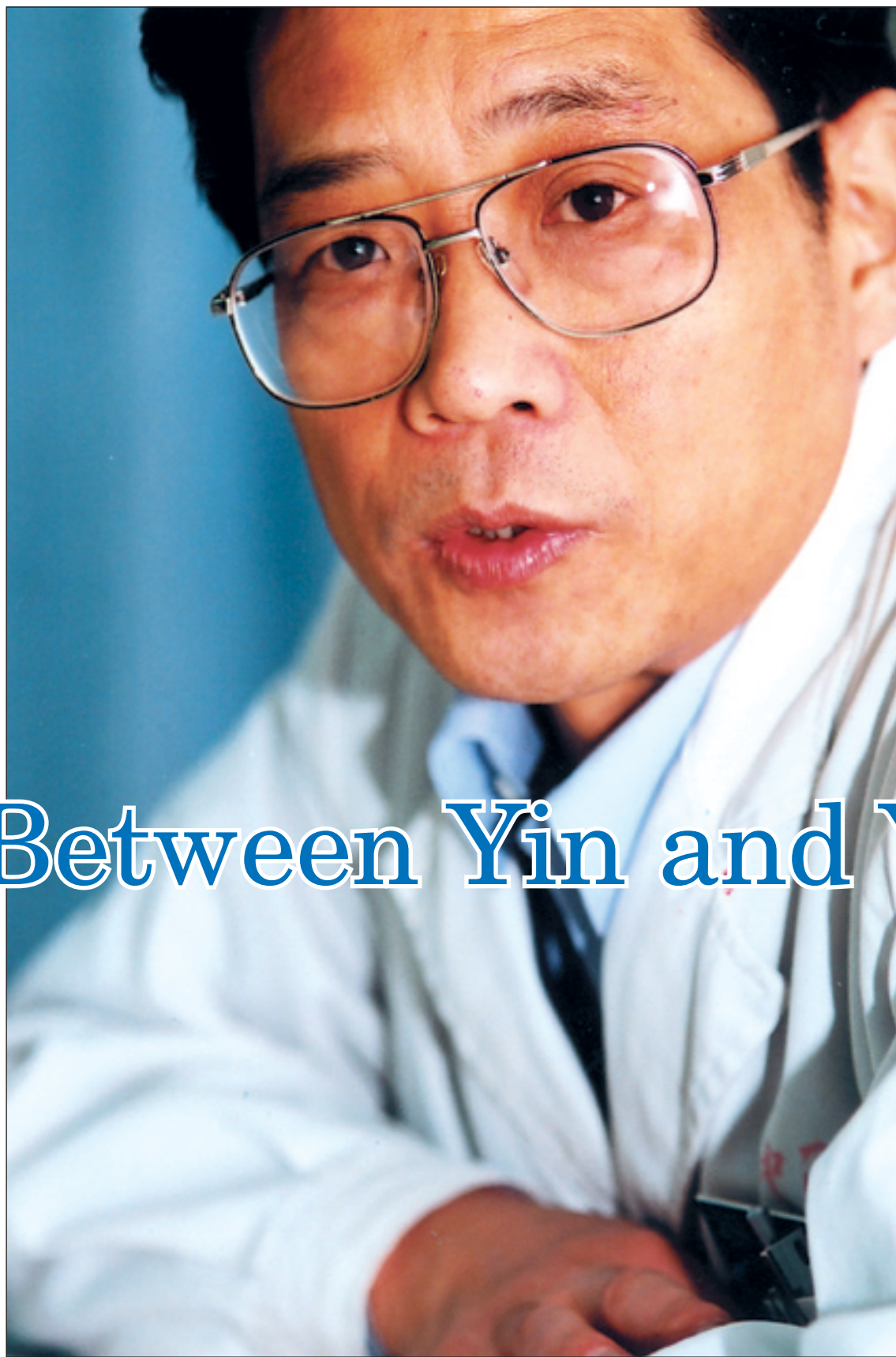
"My teacher was very strict with me. He lent me his collection of classic Chinese medicine books, and I had to return to him in one week and recite very fluently all the important paragraphs. If you couldn't pass the oral examination, he wouldn't teach you anymore."

Thanks to his teacher's strictness and his own diligence, Liu mastered the fundamentals, which are far more solid than the current college graduates. He can still recite almost all the important theories and prescriptions in the classic books without pausing for breath.

Learning western medicine and Chinese medicine, curing patients in a shabby clinic, going to patients' homes, taking up farming, working as the village accountant, for a long time Liu only slept four hours a day. Physical suffering was nothing for him, but he constantly felt dejected in spirit. "I felt very lucky that I could learn medicine; relieving the peasants from their illness made me very happy," said Liu.

Chinese medicine cures human beings, not only disease

Having graduated from the Chinese medicine department of the Capital Medical University, by the end of 1982 Liu Jincheng was assigned to Beijing Hospital of Chinese Medicine. From resident physician to the chief physician, 19 years



① - ③ **Liu in consultation with patients and students**

Photos by Michael Reynolds



④ **The medicine preparation room**
⑤ **Relaxing with Jinghu**

⑥ **Taijiquan is an effective way of preserving health**

age of 56.

Sometimes it happens: once a nurse sent a patient to consulting room No.20, telling the patient there was an experienced, mature doctor. The patient pushed the door open, saw Liu sitting behind the desk surrounded by several students. He closed the door immediately and went to complain to the nurse, "There is no mature doctor, only students."

Liu laughed, "I wish I could look older, then what I say may be more persuasive at first sight."

However, what Liu says is persuasive enough for those who get the chance to work with him. Liu's student, Xiao Chen from Taiwan said her teacher seems to be very strict, scolding them seriously when they become absent-minded, make mistakes or don't work hard, "But he is an excellent teacher, he teaches us by heart."

Green medicine

According to Chinese medicine theory, the occurrence of disease results from the imbalance of Yin and Yang. Balance is relative, while imbalance is absolute. That's why people are usually in a sub-healthy state. The function of herbal medicine is to balance Yin and Yang. That explains why many old Chinese medicine doctors still have glowing cheeks and enjoy excellent health: they can hear and see well into their 70s or 80s.

Liu Jincheng said that Chinese medicine has been proved effective for the past 2,000 years, and that what it lacks now is more utilization of modern technology.

Having practiced western medicine in the countryside for more than seven years, Liu certainly does not repel western medicine. But he thinks that in some way Chinese medicine is superior to western medicine.

Only having four years to serve at the hospital, Liu has already worked out his plan for after retirement. That is to advocate Chinese medicine, the 'green medicine' concept.

First of all, Liu said, he intends to let the world know that herbal medicine is not something that originated in Korean, or Japan, but in China. China only occupies a current global Chinese medicine market share of five percent, only several hundred million yuan each year, while U.S. medicine exported to China reaches two billion U.S. dollars. It's still very hard for Chinese medicines to obtain certification from the Food and Drug Administration of the U.S., we have many good medicines, such as medicines made by Tong Ren Tang which are not recognized by the market. "There is lots of work to do," said Liu.

Asked where he got the concept of 'green medicine', Liu said that he was inspired by the Green Peace Organization. The goal of the organization is to protect the environment, nature, while the goal of Chinese medicine is to protect the life of human beings.

Nature is green, human beings live with nature, when we die we go back to nature. Liu's green medicine concept is to tell people to return to nature while we are alive. The pattern of our diet, our knowledge about health, even when we have to take medicine, should follow the green concept. For example, in our diet, we should eat more green vegetables; taking medicine, more herbal medicines than white pills; and most importantly, the Chinese medicine theory places great emphasis on preserving health. To have a healthy body, mind, and life style, adjust diet according to the change of seasons and location, adapt oneself to nature, and live harmoniously with nature, all the above are covered in the green medicine concept.

Apart from novel health concepts, during the interview Liu talked about WTO, intellectual property rights, the Anti-Tactical Ballistic Missile Treaty, and even the new year hit film *Big Shot's Funeral*, whatever influences the world.

"I have to know about what is happening outside my window," said Liu, "because that's where my patients come from."

have passed. What makes Liu so proud is that he has students in all provinces nationwide including Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan; except for one place, Tibet. Foreign students formally study under Liu's guidance, from one day to one year, mostly Japanese, then Koreans, Americans, Germans, English, and French.

Do foreign students experience a gap in understanding with Chinese medicine? "Yes," confirmed Liu, "because of the cultural difference. But if their Chinese language skills are advanced, things might be easier." Even Chinese students are unable to understand perfectly the subtle theories in the classic books, let alone foreigners. In that case, to study Chinese medicine well, one has to have a good understanding of traditional Chinese culture first. It needs self-cultivation by piecemeal accumulation. Liu said, "This is very important.

Chinese medicine cures human beings, not only disease. As a Chinese medicine doctor, one needs to have a healthy concept about life."

The doctor should use his own experience as an example to influence the patient. For western medicine, the reputation of the hospital is recognized, meanwhile for Chinese medicine, the reputation of the doctor himself is of great importance. Since the focus of Chinese medicine is to prevent rather than cure disease, helping the individual to establish a correct concept about health and master effective methods to preserve health, the role of the Chinese medicine doctor is like combining the roles of the western doctor and psychiatrist in one.

"Sometimes I wish I looked older, or even better I had white hair, or a long white beard," without a single white hair plus a pair of sharp eyes, well-preserved Liu looks much younger than his real



From 1949 to 1958, every anniversary banquet on national day was staged in Beijing Hotel

Old Hotel Blossoms On Centenary

By Zhao Pu

A newly built sunshine corridor with a glass roof links up the four buildings that represent the different periods and architectural styles of Beijing Hotel. Walking along the corridor one takes a journey through the 20th century, accompanied by the 120-year-old Bosendorfer Piano and old furniture in speculating over the glorious times of the hotel and the celebrities who once checked in.

At the end of the first year of the new millennium, Beijing Hotel rejoiced in celebrating its 100th birthday.

The century-old hotel, first established as a French pub in 1900, survived as a witness to the recent 100-year history of the ancient capital. It sheds much light on the past century: the pain in wartime, the ecstasy on the establishment of a new country, the rapid modernization after the 1980s...

French pub in 1900

The history of the hotel can be traced back to the beginning of the last century, at a miserable time when the country saw the falling of the declining Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and an upsurge of foreign invasion.

In the year 1900, invading troops of the 'eight allied powers' forced their way into Beijing. The capital was plundered by the foreign armies, who occupied the embassy area to the east of the present Tian'anmen Square. Some pubs and bars opened for entertaining foreign soldiers around that area.

At the end of 1900, a little pub was opened by two Frenchmen at Suzhou Hutong selling cheap wine and simple food. The pub ran a prosperous business and was moved to the north of the compound a year later. Settled in a large traditional compound, the pub was enlarged into a hotel and was named Beijing Hotel.

Century reminisce

As the oldest hotel in existence in the capital, while Beijing Hotel allows many occasions for retrospection and reminiscence of the past century, it also hides numerous stories of many big names in history.

According to the record of the hotel's history, the western snacks the last Emperor Puyi tasted for the first time at the imperial garden of the Forbidden City were prepared by Beijing Hotel.

The hotel reserves the room once occupied by Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of Chinese democracy in 1925, as a 'celebrity suite'. Beijing Hotel was the last hotel he stayed in before dying in Beijing.

At the Geneva Conference in 1954, Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977) tasted the 'Crispy Fried Duck' cooked by a Beijing Hotel chef Fan Junkang who accompanied Premier Zhou Enlai to the conference. Chaplin loved the delicious



■ 1915



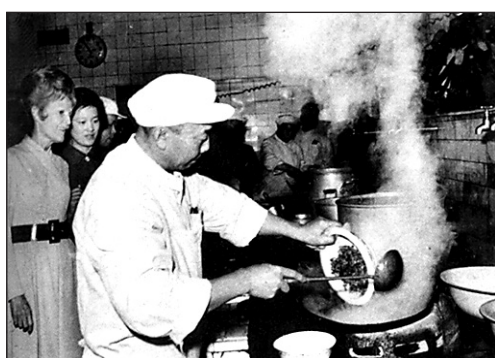
■ 1920s



■ 1974



■ 2001



■ Mrs. Pat Nixon visited the hotel's kitchen on February 22, 1972

Chinese duck and asked for an additional one to bring back for his son.

In the early 1950s when the Soviet Union helped in building the Beijing Exhibition Hall, an exchange in the food industry was also launched between the two countries. A Moscow Restaurant was set up nearby the Beijing Exhibition Hall, while a Beijing Hotel was also erected in Moscow. Chefs from the Beijing Hotel in Beijing brought traditional Chinese cuisine to Moscow. It is said that Russian people began to eat dumplings from then on.

During their visit to China in 1972, President Richard Nixon and Mrs. Pat Nixon fully admired the delicious Chinese food presented by Beijing Hotel. On the second day of their visit, Mrs. Nixon visited the hotel's kitchen and praised Beijing Hotel as the headquarters of the profound Chinese cuisine.

Glorious periods

In the 100 years of its history, the ownership of the hotel has frequently changed hands: from French to Italian, to Japanese, Chinese Republic government, and finally taken over by the government of new China after 1949. The present four buildings of the hotel were established in different times, standing for various historical backgrounds.

The century-old hotel has lived through three glorious periods in history. In the 1920s under the ownership of Banque Industrielle de Chine, the hotel enjoyed high prestige as the best hotel in Beijing. Most foreign and domestic celebrities and merchants passing through the city favored this hotel. The accommodation rate in the 1917 seven-floor red building of the hotel once exceeded 100% during that time, even the corridors were inhabited by guests.

The celebration banquet of the founding of new China on October 1, 1949 was held in Beijing Hotel. From then on to 1958, every anniversary banquet on national day was staged here, as well as other governmental banquets and receptions. The west building of the hotel was erected during this period in 1954.

The 1974 building standing on the east was built four years before reform and opening-up in 1978. Meanwhile, the hotel ranked as the best in China and its service and management standards set a model for the domestic hotel industry. It had entered another golden period of development.

A wedding was held at the banquet hall beside the sunshine corridor last Saturday morning, intensifying the festivity of the hotel's century anniversary. When asked about the reason for choosing the hotel to hold their wedding, the groom smiled, "This is the oldest hotel in the city, we hope our marriage can last as long as this hotel." Peels of laughter and sincere wishes spilled out of the wedding hall and reverberated around the age-old hotel.

Producing the Love of Life

By Miao Yajie

He held his one-man art exhibition in 21 cities across the United States as early as 1980; nine years later he began his one-man world tour in 17 countries. He was the chief designer of the Air China emblem, and the logo for Beijing to bid for the 2008 Olympic Games. Now he has feasted art circles and art lovers in Beijing with his fifth one-man art exhibition in the National Museum of Fine Arts. Over 3,000 pieces of works occupy 11 of the 13 exhibition halls of the gallery. Paintings and calligraphy, bronze sculptures, pottery, carvings, and folk crafts testify to the burning creativity of the artist with pouring colors and ink, dancing strokes and strong folk flavor.

His name is Han Meilin (韩美林), or M. L. Han.

These 3,000 pieces were the fruits of two years' endeavor, taking his heart bypass surgery last winter into consideration; the amount

only the Picasso print exhibition at the China Millennium Monument Museum last December could compete in such universal appeal. Many friends of Meilin wrote articles to express their recognition of this wildly prolific artist, and a common understanding of his personality centers on his naivety, and passion. Meilin says that whenever he sees paper, he can't help drawing on it. It is because of his naivety and passion that the exhibits in the national museum turned out so free and powerful. Cute animals, female bodies, and mother and child both on paper and with bronze, paper cuts, blue print cloth, a cotton tiger, porcelain bowls and plates....

Which one is his favorite, paintings, calligraphy, sculpture, or porcelain? "Every piece of work is like my baby, all are precious to me," said Han, "I can't name which is No. 1, which is No.2."

However for Mrs. Han, what touched her most are her husband's essays. "A perfect man," she commented, "He has all the virtue a man should possess. Romantic, humorous, passionate, and full of temperament or interest for life."

Han's letter to his future father-in-law made the father willingly agree to the marriage. Mrs. Han said, "The essay he wrote to me was so touching: if I had five sisters, I would agree to marry all of them to him."

Comments from Shi Yuanguang, who came to Han's show twice in a week, may find resonance in the hearts of other viewers. An artist first of all should be a good man. Shi said he learned about Han Meilin from media and his biography. He respected Han's personality and also his artistic capability. So he came with his family for the second time to take photos and make a video recording of the exhibits as well as the artist. "Allowing viewers to shoot pictures shows the personality of the artist, as well as his confidence. Han Meilin is not afraid of being imitated, which from another prospective shows that he is imitable," said Shi.



and dimension of his works does mean something to many.

"I began to work like crazy after the walk through Hades," 65-year-old Han said, "the wildness rose to its peak after I recovered; we finished over 1,000 pieces, 700 varieties of porcelain in two months." Most of these porcelains now occupy the right side hall on the second floor.

Two years minus half a year in the hospital, 3,000 pieces divided by 550 days mean about five to six works were produced per day. Han Meilin said that his unbridled passion comes from the love for life, the beauty of life. Meanwhile, many of the works were products of the fruitful coordination between Han and his seven assistants.

Some media have praised him as the 'Oriental Picasso'. Han responded, "First of all, the remark shows that they are not confident enough. Han Meilin is Han Meilin, China's Han Meilin. Second, it's not appropriate to compare art, because each artist has his own style, each has his strong point." Whether he agreed or not, the number of visitors to his exhibition last weekend was for sure encouraging. Indeed,



Photo by Chen Shuyi

Exhibition:
2001/12/31-2002/1/13
Place:
National Museum of Fine Arts
Open: 9:00-4:00
Entrance Fee: 15 yuan

Power of Nonsense

By Shi Xinyu

A professional writer should be responsible for the imagination of his or her native language.

So says Liu Zhenyun, a well-known Chinese writer who has been a professional writer for 20 years since his maiden work was published. Facing up to that sense of responsibility, he has produced a new book *A Load of Nonsense*, published by the China Workers' Publishing House this month.

It is a story with no beginning or end that develops along the lines of neither stream of time nor change of location. What propels it forward is just the imagination, which is expressed through the nonsense the characters spout. In a drama-like structure and teasingly comic tone, Liu outlines an absurd imaginary land - West Fifty Street.

A group of ridiculously small potatoes lives on West Fifty Street, which stands as a metaphor for a fast moving modern society. The characters push their imagination to find a kind of life that they could never possibly attain themselves. In the process they try to change into others, and unconsciously they lose their way and go crazy. Then they begin to find the reason for their madness, but only deeper craziness lies ahead.

"*A Load of Nonsense* could be seen as some kind of linguistic experiment," commented Zhou Yan, the editor of the book. Liu Zhenyun has inserted fragments of voices from everyday life into incongruous contexts, creating an effect of the absurd. Behind this absurdity lies a public relinquishing of individualities and sensibilities. "This seeming nonsense would be powerful enough to make readers look deep into their own lives," said Zhou Yan.

The abstract and avant-garde style Liu Zhenyun has employed in this work has not received loud applause, though at least 40,000 copies have been sold. Strong criticism has frequently been heard, and some readers even described the book as the beginning of the end of writers speaking in normal Chinese. Facing all this, Liu just said, "It's a serious book."

Characters on Stage

Old Ma - a Cobbler
Old Du - a Butcher
Old Jiang - an Intellectual Capitalist
Madam Mengjiang - a legendary character who once reduced the Great Wall to rubble from her tears
Old Feng - an owner of a public bathroom
Female Compere - a TV star
Young Shi - a lady of pleasure in a nightclub
Young Bai - a female cabbage seller
Old Guo - a male sweetbread soup seller
Ogress Bone-White - a human devouring devil, female

West Fifty Street and how much madder they will become. But before we begin, I have a question: do the words in your mouth represent the madness of the whole of West Fifty Street, or just yourself? This is very important to the program.

Old Feng:

You may take it as whatever you like, because what represents myself also represents the whole West Fifty Street. If so-called sane people, right up to presidents and premiers, can represent others, then people who have already gone nuts would not care



Old Yang - a service man in the public bathroom
Old Hou - a junkman

The Fourth Scene: Old Feng and the Female Compere

The female compere:
Mr. Old Feng, welcome to our Talkfest program. Today's topic is the madness of the people on

too much about being represented by myself. Whenever the sane send congratulatory letters or condolence telegrams, they would all say: "Merely on behalf of myself and the people in my country, bla bla bla", right? See, even on behalf of all the people in the country, they would

say "merely"! What bullshit! (Then he pointed at the breasts of the female compere.) If you can say, "on behalf of our audience..." why can't I say "on behalf of the whole West Fifty Street?" I am as mad as them, what I say could only be crazier than what they say. How could I leave any space or opportunity for them?

The Sixth Scene: Impersonation Show

"What is Dream Theater? It is a stage offering you an opportunity to imitate someone else, which is also your new self. Only when you succeed will your dreams come true, and you will smoothly turn into someone else.

Who never dreamt of becoming someone else? We have daydreams, we watch TV, we go to watch movies and dramas, and we even surf on the Internet: the motive for all these things is just the longing to experience the lives of others'. Also the mistakes occurring in the process of changing into others make us become foolish, mad, deaf, dumb, heartless and soulless!

What is the final solution to save us from that situation or to extend that situation to more people? The only way is to give up the old ways and come to my, Old Guo's, Dream Theater. I will give you a chance to imitate who you want to be, and that will liberate you from the madness, or let you be more foolish and crazy!"

Extract from *A Load of Nonsense*
Translated by Shi Xinyu

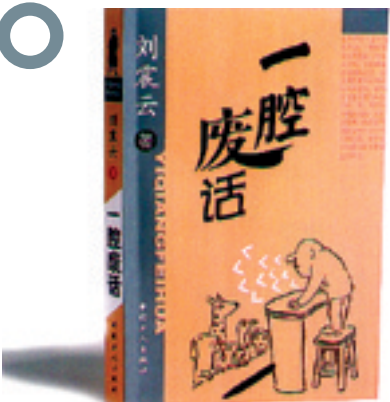


Photo by Cui Jun

Words From Readers

* How could such a book be called a masterpiece? Actually, as its name predicts, inside the book is just some difficult nonsense! The writer has gone too far away from people in real life.

* This novel is a mixed chorus and contains a huge amount of metaphors. You might think he was talking about this, or you might feel he was talking about that. This reveals the complexity of real life.

* Why has Liu Zhenyun also begun to speak in that strange artificial tone? I often took him as the last writer who wrote normal Chinese, but he has disappointed me this time.

Words From Author

* Though *A Load of Nonsense* is composed mostly by imagination, it still contains ordinary people who create all the imaginations and longings in daily life. But most of us always overlook those occasional creations. I wish those creations could be written down, so I wrote the book.

* A writer is an individual craftsman, sharing few differences with a cobbler or a hotdog seller. The only difference is the latter need to work under set standards. Tomorrow's hotdogs should be as good as today's - that's called quality. But for a writer, his future works should not have the same face as his present one - that's also called quality.

* *A Load of Nonsense* is hard to understand? I do not think so. On the contrary, I even felt it is more and more close to real life. For literature, we should pay more attention to things we are not familiar with. If we know something clearly, why should we waste time to write or read it?

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China's Movie Big Shots Meet Again



Graduation photo of the 1982 students of the Beijing Film Academy
Photo provided by Wang Xi

By Zhu Lin

Fulfilling a promise made twenty years ago, Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou and other leading Chinese film directors are to meet at the 'The Fifth Generation Film Artists' Grand Gathering' to be held on February 16 and 17.

Chinese film directors are divided into generations. In 1982, when Chinese cinema was recovering along with other forms of art, around 100 students graduated from the only professional film school in China, the Beijing Film Academy. They are now known as the Fifth Generation Film Artists.

Compared with earlier generations,

they have been much more influenced by modern Western schools and culture. Celebrated works like Zhang Yimou's *Ju Dou* bear testimony to the huge change of directors' and scriptwriters' internationalized cultural horizons and aesthetic values.

Ever since Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum* won a top prize at the Berlin Film Festival in 1988, Chinese names have started to shine at all kinds of leading international film festivals. It is the Fifth Generation Film Artists who brought Chinese films onto the international stage. In the 1980s and early '90s, their films were criticized for pandering to Western taste by exposing the shabby side of Chinese rural life, but people have gradually accepted their concept of film production.

The Fifth Generation Film Artists also underwent a conceptual

change in film making. When Chen Kaige produced his *Yellow Earth* and *King of Children* in the mid 1980s, he was very rebellious and tried to find a voice of his own. But later on, together with other directors, he was greatly influenced by the Hollywood way of film producing in a more commercialized world. He showed an impressive balance of considering the audiences' preference and artistic value in *Farewell My Concubine* produced in 1993.

Now the 1982 class will re-assemble once more. During the gathering, not only Fifth Generation Artists, but also a group of other celebrities will attend.

Maggie Cheung, Gong Li, Feng Xiaogang, Tony CW Leung and many others will all go to share the electric atmosphere. Activities will include symposiums, performances and film showing. Besides, a scholarship named the Fifth Generation Film Artists will be established.

Gu Changwei, director of photography of *Red Sorghum* (left)
Huo Jianqi, director of *Postman of the Mountains* Photo by Jackey

Five Flavors Permeate Roast Duck

By Zhu Lin

Sweet, sour, spicy, bitter, salty - the five flavors that form the base of Chinese cuisine, as well as life itself, are concocted in *The Best Restaurant*, a drama about the history of Beijing's Quanjude Roast Duck.

The scenes of *The Best Restaurant* take place in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Lu Mengshi took charge of Fujue Restaurant (assumed name of Quanjude) when the old manager was dying. Leading the staff, Lu propelled Fujue to full prosperity, making it the best Beijing Roast Duck restaurant. "Lu is like a cook. His dealings are like cooking with five flavors," sighs the accountant of the restaurant emotionally during the drama.

Sour experience befalls the old waiter. Everyday he pleases the diners, who enjoy his service but look down on him at the same time. Yuchu, Lu's lover, supports his work as much as possible. The

old managers' sons, two dandies who do nothing for the restaurant, accuse Lu that he "is stealing their family property". Their interference constitutes the deepest well of bitterness in Lu's work.

The audience also picks up delicate, complex aromas through the story. A vivid picture of Chinese social change at that time unfolds through the development of Fujue Restaurant. The five flavors are not only limited to Lu's experience, but also can be broadened into people's lives as a whole. "What I try to do is sublimate what happens in a restaurant into life's tragedy as a whole," said He Jiping, the scriptwriter.

After achieving a glorious record of 450 performances around China 12 years ago, a new production of *The Best Restaurant* is still pulling the punters in. When the drama was staged in Hong Kong last year, it was a box office sell out for the 50 days of performances.



Photo by Liu Ping

British 'Red Shoes' to Jump onto Beijing Stage

By Yi He

Children in Beijing will get the chance to enjoy a drama version of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. The Kneehigh Theater, from Britain, will stage Andersen's *Red Shoes* at the People's Art Theater from January 24 to 26.

Red Shoes tells about a young orphan who is punished for her vanity in wearing red shoes to church. She is condemned to dance in them until the skin of her feet turns red and raw.

"It's a luscious, physical fairytale. The audience was an ocean of teary sniffles," said *The Times* on talking about the performance. Chinese subtitles will be provided during the performance.

The Kneehigh Theater is a company of 20 years standing from Cornwall in the southwest of the UK with a reputation for energetic, inventive and popular work.

The performance will first be held in Shanghai from January 17 to 19 at the Shanghai Theater Center, before coming to Beijing.



Photo provided by Tracy Driscoll

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Best Bites



Chairman Mao's favorite Hongshaorou (Red Braised Pork)

Photo by Li Chao

Hidden Away Nostalgia

By Li Dan

A friend of mine who works as an English tour guide told me about a French visitor who asked a taxi driver to take him to a club or restaurant named "Red Capital". It seems a friend had highly praised the club's communist ambience on returning to France. However the place seemed so elusive, that even the locals did not know its whereabouts, and as you might imagine, the Frenchman failed to find it.

Luckily for our readers, we've found the place, located among Qing Dynasty era Siheyuan (courtyard houses) in Dongsijiutiao, a few meters south of Ping'an Street in Dongcheng District. During the Qing Dynasty, it was the residence of the Manchurian "White Banner" clan, the highest ranking of the "bannermen", the warrior class of the day. The building is 200 years old and excavations during its restoration uncovered pieces of pottery dating back to the Ming Dynasty.

The owner, who prefers not to be identified, is an American with a passion for Chinese culture and history. He bought the house some years ago and turned it into an elegant, and decidedly low profile restaurant. There are no signs outside, the only giveaway is a Red Flag saloon car parked in front of the gate.

The restaurant has two distinct themes; Qing Dynasty China and 1950s' China. In the yard on the left of the entrance is a Qing-style dining room with an emperor's

robe hanging in a large frame on one wall, and a collection of porcelain pieces along another wall. Old fashioned square wooden tables for eight are scattered around the room. Usually, guests are invited after dinner to the 1950s room for a salon chat. "We are trying to capture the mood of the 1950s, when there was a great deal of idealism, hope and enthusiasm," says the owner. Thus comes the spirit of the Red Capital Club, which is dedicated to China's homegrown capitalists, who stayed behind after liberation to help build a new China. Most of the furniture, including leather and wooden chairs, tea tables, and reading lamps used to belong to officials in the 1950s and 1960s. Among them are an armchair that once belonged to Lin Biao, and an old telephone, on which if you pick it up, you will hear a recording of the voice of Chairman Mao! In the corner of the room is a little bar that serves both Chinese and imported alcohol, and in particular, Red Capital Club wine.

Another specialty of Red Capital Club is the Zhongnanhai Cuisine. Zhongnanhai (中南海) is the area just west of the Forbidden City where senior party officials have lived and worked since 1949. Chefs from the kitchens of some of China's most famous leaders prepare dishes at Red Capital Club, including Deng's Chicken (Deng Xiaoping's favorite), Red Braised Pork (Hongshaorou, Chairman Mao's favorite) and Mao's Socialist

Economic Model - beef fried with potatoes. After dinner and a chat in the bar, the Red Flag saloon car is available to take you for a drive around Beijing city.

I hope that Frenchman will visit Beijing again, and this time has more luck finding the elusive Red Capital Club!

Add: No. 66 Dongsijiutiao (东四九条), Dongcheng District, bus 24 or taxi directly to Dongsijiutiao, walk about 200 meters in the alley, Red Capital Club (新红资俱乐部).

Price: 200 yuan per person.

Open: Mon-Sat, 6pm-11pm.

Tel: 64027150 (daytime), 84018886

(evenings and weekends).



Coin Tricks

By Li Dan

You are bound to see people standing in front of small coin stalls at Panjiayuan on weekends, carefully scrutinizing ancient looking coins. Sometimes they blow on the coin and then hold it to their ears, sometimes they bite the coins to test the quality.

These are obviously ancient coin aficionados and collectors. Coin collecting remains a popular hobby for many, as those small coins are easy to store and of high aesthetic value. However, there are many fakes at Panjiayuan and you have to be very careful when you make a purchase.

It is worth mentioning that you cannot value old coins according to their age alone. Rareness is what counts when it comes to value. For instance a 2000-year-old coin from the Han Dynasty may well be a lot worth less than a rare silver dollar from the Republic of China, which can fetch several hundred yuan these days. Of course you should also consider other details such as shape, size, patterns, inscriptions, materials and producing areas.

A common trick of forgers is to put some rust on the surface of brand-new coin. But if you dip the coin in hot water, or scrape the rust with a fingernail, the rust on



Photo by Chen Shuyi

a fake will easily come off. If you knock the coin, the genuine one sounds crisp and sharp, while the forgery sounds a little bit dull. If you have some knowledge of

ancient Chinese characters, you might tell a forgery more easily by the inscriptions. However it is much harder to differentiate a genuine one from a forgery if you have never seen the real thing. A broad knowledge of Chinese history is also helpful.

Hopefully, these few tips will help you to tell a forgery from the real thing. Next time a vendor tells you he has coins dating from the Ming or Qing dynasties, see if you can go home with an antique in your pocket, but don't forget to bargain! **Add:** Panjiayuan Flea Market, Panjiayuan Rd, south part of east east Third Ring Road, Chaoyang District. **Open:** Sat & Sun, 8am-4pm.

Panjiayuan



Flea Market

MODERN ART AND ECHOES FROM THE PAST

By Li Dan

Huiyinlang (Gallery of Echo) is located in basement two of COFCO Plaza, and the owner Fang Fang has collected a diverse range of goods, such as simple and unsophisticated ancient furniture, unusual pottery and tree-root carvings, and especially the unique cowhide paintings.

Perhaps the first things to catch your eye will be those pottery moulds and carvings in grotesque shape and appearance, which will amaze you no matter how far your imagination may reach. Take for instance a pottery bird's head, perhaps an eagle, with a huge mouth but a baby pair of wings. In the corner stands a pair of giraffes, also pottery. One is short while the other stretches its neck toward the ceiling. There are strongly contrasting effects and creative spirits in these works of art. Fang Fang has also collected some beautifully ornamented furniture, mainly from the Ming and Qing dynasties.

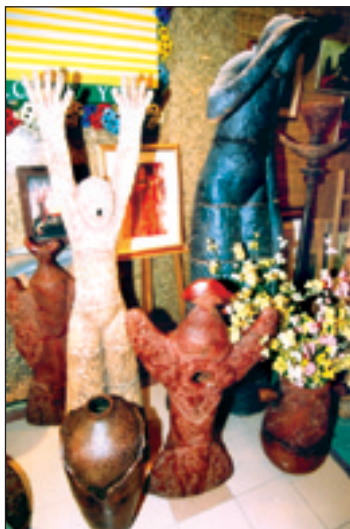


Photo by Chen Shuyi

Huiyinlang has on show numerous cowhide paintings by Fang Fang's husband Fang Yong, a well-known artist. Cowhide painting is a new art form in China, combining carving, painting and relief sculpture skills. Fang Yong's paintings, merging both western style realism and the bold outlines of traditional Chinese watercolor, cover such themes as recalling childhood and dreams, ranging from several thousand to nearly ten thousand yuan.

Add: Basement 2, A15, COFCO Plaza (中粮广场), World Furniture Garden, Dongcheng District, Huiyinlang (回音廊), bus 1, 4, 9 or subway to Beijing Zhankou. **Open:** 9am-8pm, everyday. **Tel:** 65266666 ext. 5225.

Mall News

Sogo Shopping Mall

(庄胜崇光百货)

1/F, 5th Street down jacket, 500-900 yuan, all the latest designs; 6/F, Bobdog 50-70%, Maling 50-80%, Euromoda 50-80%, Youngor 50-80%, Lee Cooper 60-90%.

Where: 8 Xuanwumenwai Dajie, Xuanwu District, subway to Xuanwumen. **When:** Jan 9-15. **Tel:** 63103388 ext 2043.

Beijing Lufthansa Friendship Shopping Mall

(燕莎友谊商城)

To promote Shiseido's new series of makeup products, if you spend more than 480 yuan, you'll receive a free manicure bag; buy the Skincare, get a free facial cleaning brush; buy the Zen series, and get the Skincare samples.

Where: 52 Liangmaqiaolu, Chaoyang District, bus 402, 405 to Liangmaqiao. **When:** Jan 10-13. **Tel:** 64651851.

SciTech Shopping Mall

(赛特商场)

1/F, till Jan 13, Vichy promotion; 3/F, till Jan 14, Boss, Zegna, Versace, 70-40%.

Where: 22 Jiangguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. **Tel:** 65124488.

Guiyou Shopping Mall

(贵友商厦)

Spring Festival Sale 3/F, Smart Garments 20%, Beirm, Juilio 20-60%, Ideal 30-50%; 4/F, Jack & Jones, Only, Soda 50%, Theme 30-50%.

Where: Jia 5, Jianwaidajie, near Silk Market, Chaoyang District. **When:** till Jan 20. **Tel:** 85629122.

One World Department Store

(世都百货)

1/F, Dchrist 25%, Jourdan 85%, Toypes 30%, Amurs 25%; 2/F, Finity 12%, Nicole Miller 85% (base), Passion 25%; 4/F, Versace, Bobdog 20%, Mickey 30% (some).

Where: 99 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District, 103, 104, 420, 814 to Dengshixikou (灯市西口). **When:** Jan 18. **Tel:** 65138899 ext 8808.

What's your favorite shop, stand, bar or restaurant? We will be very happy to share your experience with all our readers and don't forget, a mystery gift is waiting for you if we print your story. Please contact us at 65902524 or 13910916642. Email: shopping@ynet.com.

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Design Changes No Longer Permitted Without Owners' Consent

By Wang Dandan

Promised lawn replaced with the property management office; extra floors being added to the building in front of yours, in contravention of what you thought was the height-limit, blocking out your sunshine.... Such problems are soon to be a thing of the past!

As of January 1, all residential projects in Beijing must comply with the "Rules and Regulations on Programming of Construction Project", issued by the Beijing City Programming Committee. According to Yaoying, vice director of the Beijing City Programming Committee, the regulations stipulate that when construction of a project is completed, it will be examined for differences with the original plan. If any are found, for which the majority of apartment owners or the committee did not give approval, the project will not be granted with a property right certificate.

If you have any enquiries, call 68056064 (Chinese service only).



Pictures by Xie Feng

Certification for Real Estate Brokers

By Wang Dandan

China is currently establishing a qualification certificate system to regulate real estate brokers. This system will be in accordance with the national standard.

From the beginning of 2002, anyone engaged in real estate business must obtain relevant qualification certification, and the certificate should be registered with the local real estate bureau.

This is according to the "Temporary Rules on Real Estate Brokers", developed by the Ministry of Personnel and Ministry of Construction.

In order to improve the certification process, the two ministries have also published the "Regulations on Examinations of Real Estate Brokers".

As part of the certification process, examinations will be in the third quarter of the year. The first one will be held in October 2002. The topics for examination are: "Basic system and policies", "Regulations on Real Estate Brokers", "Introduction to Real Estate Brokerage" and "Business Range of Real Estate Brokers". The examinations will be held over four days, with 2 hours for each subject.

The implementation of the certification process and the exam system aim to help regulate and develop the real estate market. They will also help protect consumers' rights and improve the professional standard of real estate brokers.



Office Prices

Continental Building:

Rent: US\$19/month/sqm
Location: Gulouwai Street, Dongcheng District. Located between North Second Ring Road and North Third Ring Road.

Eagle Run Plaza:

Rent: US\$22-25/month/sqm
Location: Xiaoyun Road, Chaoyang District. It is across the street from the Third Embassy District and close to Lufthansa Center and 10 minutes walk to bus station at Third Ring Road.

First Shanghai Center:

Rent: US\$26/month/sqm
Location: Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang District.

Grand Place:

Rent: US\$26.5/month/sqm
Location: Anli Road, Chaoyang District. In Asian Game Village.

Hyundai Millennium Tower:

Rent: US\$28/month/sqm
Location: Xiaoyun Road, Chaoyang District. Being close to the Lufthansa Center and Landmark towers.

Jing An Center:

Rent: US\$23-27/month/sqm
Location: Zuoqiazhuang, Chaoyang District. It is close to Beijing International Exhibition Center, Royal Hotel and Carrefour Supermarket.

Lufthansa Center:

Rent: US\$52/month/sqm(net)
Location: Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang District. Close to east Third Ring Road.

Pacific Century Place:

Rent: US\$36/month/sqm
Location: Gongtibi Road, Chaoyang District. Close to East Third Ring.

Raycom Infotech Park Tower A:

Rent: US\$25-30/month/sqm

(excluding management fee)
Location: Zhongkeyuannan Road, Haidian District.

Silver Tower:

Rent: US\$35/month/sqm
Location: Northeast Third Ring Road, Chaoyang District. Close to Hilton Hotel.

China Life Tower:

Rent: US\$45/month/sqm(net)
Location: Chaoyangmenwai Avenue, Chaoyang District. 100 meters from Chaoyangmen subway station.

China Resources Building:

Rent: US\$36.8-38.8/month/sqm
Location: Jianguomen North Avenue, Dongcheng District.

CITIC Building:

Rent: US\$36/month/sqm(net)
Location: Jianguomenwai Avenue, Chaoyang District. Located in east part of Chang'an Avenue, with International Club on its west across the street, and the Embassy District on its south.

The Exchange Beijing:

Rent: US\$29.5/month/sqm
Location: Dongsanhuannan Road, Chaoyang District. Located at the intersection of Jianguomenwai Avenue and East Third Ring Road. Located near the Guomao Subway Station.

Towercrest Plaza:

Rent: US\$20-23/month/sqm
Location: Xiaoyun Road, Chaoyang District. The Beijing International Airport remains a ten minutes' drive.

The above prices are quoted prices and may be subject to change.
DTZ Debenham Tie Leung provides the above information. For further information, please go to

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Guest
Quiz

Target: Radisson SAS Hotel
When: 18:30-19:30, Tuesday, Jan. 8th
Hotel Detective: Wang Dandan

Indira Sura, India

I like bathing, and no matter what hotel I stay at, I first check the shower rose. Usually those with big holes are my favorite. I hate the ones with small holes, as they hurt your skin! This hotel is very good, I mean, the facilities in the bathroom.

Ilona Staller, Hungary

I am a writer and I prefer to stay in a room with double-glazing. I am so happy that most of the hotels have such windows. Moreover, I need fresh air from the air-con, not recycled air, but purified air. Here is ok, they provide purified air.

Sun Todde, Italy

I am an Italian British and I used to work for SAS, Special Air Service, in the U.K. I like this hotel's name. It reminds me of the past time. Sounds strange, doesn't it?



Office Rent Decreases in Fourth Quarter

Beijing Office Market Overview
In spite of fewer new supply and a lower vacancy rate compared to the third quarter, 2001, the office market in Beijing in the fourth quarter, 2001 continued its downward trend of last quarter with asking rents of grade A buildings continuously declining, according to Debenham Tie Leung (DTZ).

Rents continued to increase but at a slower rate. The sales market, which had been quite dormant for a long time, was relatively active, with more space taken up and asking prices increasing at a faster rate.

Supply

In the fourth quarter, 2001, three office projects came on stream which were significantly less than those in the third quarter, 2001 in terms of the size, adding 122,574 square meters to the market and bringing the total stock to 5.39 million square meters.

Raycom Infotech Park and China International Hi-tech Convention and Exhibition Center, which should have been completed by the end of last year, are expected to be ready for occupation in Q1, 2002.

Although the new grade A office supply was relatively limited, the office space released by individual landlords as well as those sublet by existing tenants exerted renewed pressure on the market.

In addition, the new supply of grade B office buildings, which is also part of the office market, further intensified the competition of the market as a whole.

Demand

The demand in The fourth quarter, 2001 was greater than that in The third quarter with the take-up Beijing 116,000 square meters as opposed to 87,000 square meters in The third quarter.

By industry, no particular sector recorded outstanding performance in The fourth quarter, 2001. Generally speaking, however, traditional industries cutting

across various sectors substituted the hi-tech industry to become the key player in the market.

In particular, special attention should be given to such sectors as finance, law firm, media, education and automobile as these sectors are expected to be the first batch of beneficiaries from the WTO.

Leasing market

The average asking rent for Grade A buildings stood at \$27.31/sqm/month on a gross basis, a 3.68% decrease over that in The third quarter and a 8.94% decrease on a year-on-year basis. In fact, the achievable rent was much lower--- asking rents could be 20% to 40% lower than transacted ones for big transactions.

Even those developers that held out longer against rent cutting in the previous quarters had to yield to the current sluggish market.

Sales Market

In comparison with the slow leasing market, the sales market continued to remain active in The fourth quarter, with some

his was issued by the Beijing Construction Committee.

The fault lies with the developer, who evidently was unable to get the permit from the State Ministry of Construction.

But meanwhile Bill cannot sell his house, nor return it to the developer. The only thing he can do is to ask a real estate agency to rent it for him.

Xu Chendi, a lawyer with Zhongsheng Law Firm, suggests that purchasers should make sure that their contract stipulates that if the developer is unable to get the legal property right certificate, the buyer can return the house to them.



Legal Aid

By Wang Yang

Following are the websites that provide renting information in Beijing in English.



www.dtz.bj.cn
www.roofinder.com
www.century21cn.com
www.homeprc.com
www.soufun.com

"HOUSING" welcomes your feedback: What kind of difficulties do you encounter when looking for housing in Beijing? What kind of information do you need? What can we help you with? Our E-mail: housing@ynet.com Tel: 65902522 Fax: 65902525

Sports

Ultimate Frisbee in Beijing

Every Sunday afternoon, for everyone from rank beginners to Olympic gold medallists. Players will be grouped into teams matched in strength. Please bring light shorts and black shirt in order to be grouped. Beginners, please come earlier to practice a little and get to know the basic rules. **Where:** Beijing Purple Jade Villas (紫玉山庄), north of Yanyuncun. **When:** Every Sunday, 2pm-4pm. **Admission:** 40 yuan, 20 yuan for PRC nationals and students. **Tel:** 13601362690 (Fi). **Website:** www.beijing-ultimate.rocks.it



Super Football Fans The Club Football Bar, Beijing's pace-setting football, theme bar & restaurant. Big Screen, exclusive memorabilia signed by some of the world's top players, unique, international menu. And, from World Cup Qualifiers to the English Premiership, UEFA Champions League to the Spanish Primera - we've got it all! Jan 12: Saturday Premiership preview, 10 pm; Leeds U vs Newcastle, 10:50 pm. Jan 13: Super Sunday Preview, 8:30pm; Southampton vs Manchester U, 9:50pm; Arsenal vs Liverpool, 12 midnight. All live!

Where: 10 Taipingzhuang, near Red House Hotel, Chunxiulu, Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. **Tel:** 64150988/64167786.

Badminton

Wanna to play badminton on weekends and communicate with others? Bring your racket and enjoy yourselves. **Where:** Beijing International School, Lido Holiday Inn Hotel, Jiangtailu, Chaoyang District. **When:** Every Sunday, 9:30-11:30am. **Admission:** 30 yuan. **Tel:** 13701097537 (Tifai).

Weather

Saturday
January 12

Clear to cloudy
Max: 6C. Min: -5C.

Sunday
January 13

Cloudy to overcast,
light snow
Max: 1C. Min: -2C.

Monday
January 14

Snow to cloudy
Max: 2C. Min: -4C.

Tuesday
January 15

Cloudy to clear
Max: 6C. Min: -5C.

Wednesday
January 16

Clear
Max: 6C. Min: -7C.

Thursday
January 17

Clear to cloudy
Max: 5C. Min: -5C.

Friday
January 18

Cloudy to overcast,
light snow
Max: 3C. Min: -3C.

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 65902520.

By Priscilla / Lydia

Music

PLUS 12 - CHINESE NEW YEAR BASH Cutting edge Techno from all corners of Asia: Japan, China, Singapore and Australia. Techno is the international sound that knows no boundaries. Wherever there is electronic music, there is Techno. Plus 12 presents four Techno DJs with roots in different parts of Asia. Jonathon Yeo: Smooth Singapore sounds. Shin Nishimura: Jacking Japanese beats. Mickey: Cutting & chopping Chinese techno. Slab: Tough techno Australian style

Where: Club Vogue 88, Sanlitun. **When:** Jan. 19, 10pm. **Admission:** 80 yuan (book before Jan. 12), 100 yuan (after Jan. 12), 150 yuan at the door. Guest DJs: Jonathan Yeo (KeFM/Zouk - Singapore), Shin Nishimura (Plus Tokyo). Resident DJ: Mickey (Plus Beijing). Featuring DJ: Slab (Club Vogue). Visual Effects: Chroma (RAF.dl/tokyo). Deco: Chinese New year Techno style. **Web Site:** www.technorient.com/plus/.

E-Mail: kiko@technasia.com. **Info:** 1390 116 8546 or 1391 006 2444. **Where to buy tickets:** Jazz-Ya, Metro Cafe, Serve the People, Sammies, Eric Paris, Ramia, Public Space, Neo Lounge-99, & Club Vogue-88.

Recital by French Jazz Pianist Didier Squiban Didier Squiban is an outstanding pianist, arranger and composer. His musical work is the happy combination of traditional Breton music, jazz improvisation and classical romanticism. **Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park. **When:** Jan. 15, 7:30pm. **Admis-**

PLUS 12



PLUS 12



PLUS 12



sion: 30-280 yuan. **Tel:** 65598285.

Oscar Movies Golden Songs Concert Symphony Orchestra of China Opera and Dance House. Conductor: Zhang Zheng. Program: Themes from Schindler's List, Dances with the Wolves, the Bridges of Madison County, Independence Day, Gone with the Wind, Mulan, Jurassic Park, Star Wars, Ghost, Gone with the Wind, Out of Africa, Chariots of Fire. **Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park. **When:** Jan. 19, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-280 yuan. **Tel:** 65598285.

Music at bars

CMCB, Tookoo, Jan. 11; Scream Record Music Festival, Jan. 12; 7 rock bands, Jan. 17-18, Get Lucky Bar, 64299109.

Prizes-Winners of the 4th Cello Competition of the Central Conservatory of Music **Where:** National Library Concert Hall, inside National Library. **When:** Jan. 12, 2:30pm. **Admission:** 10-30 yuan.

Grand Concert China Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor: Yu Long. Program: Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust. **Where:** Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongsishitiao. **When:** Jan. 22-23, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 50-300 yuan. **Tel:** 65001188 ext. 5682.

Exhibitions

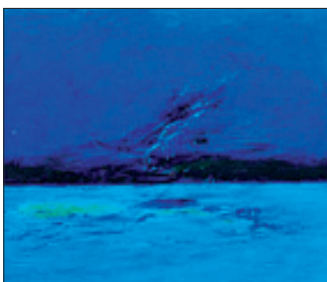


New Year - New Works Exhibition Works by Lu Chen, Li Xiaoke, Yang Gang, Bo Yun, Zhang Guimin, Xiao Feng, Liu Manwen and more. **Where:** Creation Gallery (可创画廊), north exit of Ritandonglu, Chaoyang District. **When:** till Jan. 18, 10am-7pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65067570.

Han Meilin Exhibition An exhibition on an unprecedented scale of work by Han Meilin, featuring painting, calligraphy, sculpture, carving and folk crafts. His wash paintings of the human body, calligraphy based on pottery inscriptions, sculpture named Mother & Son, all reveal the remarkable achievements of this great artist. **Where:** National Museum of Fine Art, 1 Wusidajie, bus 104, 103, 108, 111 to Meishuguan. **When:** till Jan 13, 10am-5pm. **Tel:** 64016234.

Small Oils for Your Loved Ones Collecting a selection of small paintings, the

gallery hopes to promote the idea of buying oil paintings for gift-giving. **Where:** East Gallery (艺森画廊), 3F Deshengmen Watchtower, Bei'erhuanlu. **Admission:** 2 yuan. **When:** till Jan 15, Tue-Sun, 9am-6pm. **Tel:** 82014962.



New Year Exhibition Works by 12 artists, incl. Xiao Hong, Zhang Jianbo, Zhao Wen. Opening reception: Jan. 12, 2-7pm. **Where:** New Year Art Salon (千年时间艺术画廊), front hall of 2nd floor, Diyang Tower, Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District. **When:** Jan. 12-31, 9am-6pm. **Tel:** 84536193. **Email:** newgallery@sina.com



The Tang Dynasty This major exhibition covers the Tang Dynasty (618-907A.D.) and features more than 200 artifacts related to art, cul-

ture, music, religion, social custom and foreign trade. **Where:** National Museum of Chinese History, east side of Tian'anmen Square, Dongcheng District. **When:** till the end of Jan, daily, 8:30am-4:30pm. **Tel:** 65128321.

The Sound beyond the Paintings - Ink & Wash Exhibition 60 works by over ten artists, including Zhao Jingyan, Wan Limin and Bai Yuping. The artists combine fresh colors and traditional ink lines. **Where:** Huangshicheng Gallery (皇史宬画廊), 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** Jan. 16-30, 9am-5pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65289103.



Beijing Hutong Photo Show There Cafe has a regularly changing exhibition of photographs on its walls. This month the cafe presents a series of shots of Beijing Hutongs (Laneways) by Xu Yong. **Where:** There Cafe (那里酒吧), 36 Houmenqiaodong, Mao'er Hutong (帽儿胡同). **When:** daily noon-midnight. **Tel:** 64036082.

Movies

Chinese Movie with English Subtitles - Purple Sunset (Zi Ri) Director: Feng Xiaoning, starring Wang Xuewei, Fu Dalong. Near the end of World War II, during a harsh winter, a Soviet Army unit enters China and engages Japanese troops in a big battle. When the fighting is over there are only three survivors: one Russian soldier, one Chinese soldier and one Japanese soldier. Stuck in deep snow in a forest far from civilization, the three survivors are forced to band together in order to keep alive.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, Sino-Japanese Youth Ex-



change Center, Intl. Conference Hall, 40 Liangmaqiaolu, 1 km east of Kempinski Hotel. **When:**

Jan. 18, 8pm. **Admission:** 50 yuan. **Tel:** 64615318/9.

Movies by Louis Malle (1932-1994) - Le Feu Follet (The Fire Within), 1963.

Le feu follet is a compelling and deeply moving film, argu-



ably Louis Malle's best work as a director. The film touches on the great taboos of depression and suicide with uncompromising honesty and without sentimentality. As a result, it has a genuine emotional impact and offers a true statement about life.

Where: Space for Imagination Coffee House, Jan. 19, 7pm; The Loft, Jan. 20, 3pm. **Tel:** 62791280 (Space for Imagination Coffee House), 65065592 (The Loft).

Performances

Moscow State Song & Dance Theater Remarkable dancers of the Moscow State Song & Dance Theatre will dazzle you with a display of masterly dancing. **Where:** Beijing Exhibition Center Theatre. **When:** Feb. 13-17, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 80-680 yuan. **Tel:** 65675049, 65675149, 65675930.



Classical Modern Drama - The Red Shoes British Kneehigh Theatre, Directed by Emma Rice, starring Bec Applebee, John Surman, Luis Santiago, Mike Shepherd. Adaptation of the classic fairy tale about a young girl and a pair of magical red dancing shoes. Jan. 24, 25, see Page 12.

China Acrobatics Troupe The magic of acrobatics and martial arts. Do not miss the chance to see these youngsters showing off their incredibly supple bodies. Hurry, the theater will soon close for renovation. **Where:** 36 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang Theater. **When:** till the end of Jan. **Price:**

100, 120, 150 yuan. **Tel:** 65072421/65071818.

The Clouds Are Flying By - Indian Dance Performance

Where: Minority Cultural Palace Theater, inside the Minzu Hotel, 49 Fuxingmennei Dajie, west Chang'an Avenue, Xicheng District. **When:** Jan. 18-19, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 50-280 yuan. **Tel:** 66059881.



Ballets of Tchaikovsky

Swan Lake, The Nutcracker and Sleeping Beauty. Performed by Russian State Ballet Troupe, music by Russian National Philharmonic Orchestra. **Where:** Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** Jan. 25-27, Swan Lake, Jan. 29-31, The Nutcracker, Feb. 2-4, Sleeping Beauty. **Admission:** 100-1000 yuan. **Tel:** 67179177.

Dining Out

Robert Mondavi - A Celebration of Northern Californian Wine

A wide range of Robert Mondavi wines will be featured in all Hilton outlets till March 31. Wine starts from 58 yuan per glass or 280 yuan per bottle. 64662288 ext. 7420. Shabu Shabu & Sukiya-k Specialties till Feb 28. Besides an exquisite selection of Teppanyaki, Sushi and other Japanese specialties, elaborate four course set menus are available at 248 yuan per person for lunch and dinner. 64662288 ext. 7402.

Colorful Desert Bar Rock star Cui Jian's management company presents live music here. The stage features everything from rap and electronic to punk. Where: inside the Coin and Stamp Market near Dazhongsi, Haidian District. When: Fri-Sun, 7am-2pm. **Tel:** 62654051.



Very Siam - Thai Food

A new restaurant for lovers of Thai cuisine, featuring a wide selec-

tion of local and imported beer and wine. During the grand opening period, you will receive a 20% discount and your choice of a gourmet vegetable dish for free after spending over 200 yuan excluding drinks (till Jan 31). **Where:** A10 Dongjie, Xinyuanxili, Chaoyang District. When: 11:30am-11:30pm. **Tel:** 84510031.

Northern & Southern Dim Sum Lunch Featuring dishes from the North and South by a Hong Kong Chef. **Where:** Hoi Yat Heen Cantonese Restaurant, Harbour Plaza. **Cost:** 90 yuan +15% service charge per person. **Tel:** 64362288 ext. 2600/2614.

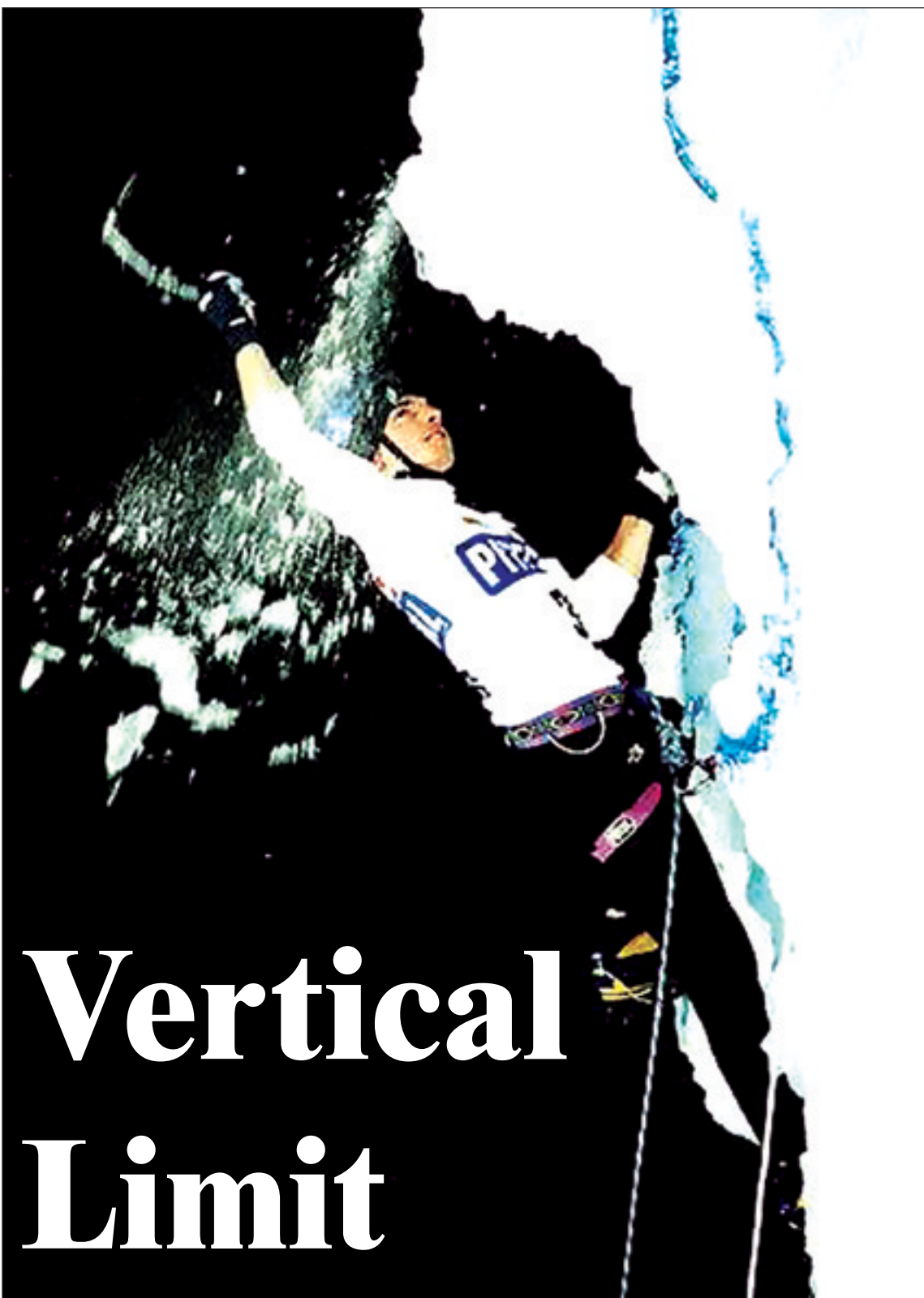


South Beauty Take advantage of the grand opening half price special! Get spicy with South Beauty's blazing hot Sichuan cuisine! **Where:** 3F, Pacific Century Place, near Changhongqiao Bridge, just off the East Third Ring Road. **Tel:** 65393502/3

Outdoor Action



This is not an activity for the faint-hearted; fear, falls and frostbite will follow, once you choose to embrace the ice wall...



Photos by Ma Yihua

Vertical Limit

By Jiang Zhong

warmer winter holds no appeal for Ma Yihua, a local extreme sports enthusiast. He and his companions have tackled most of China's challenging icefalls in cold winters.

These Ice Spirits, though not always happy in their climbing, belong to the crystal world. The freezing temperatures of winter create numerous natural icefalls around Beijing, and this year, some scenic spots have produced many artificial icefalls for players of this extreme game.

That is exciting news for Ma, and recently, he and his companions started out again early one morning, when even the stars seemed frozen in the dark sky.

In the warm car, they could not suppress their exhilaration, and exchanged tales of adventurous experiences unceasingly. They were heading for a famous scenic spot named Taoyuanxiangu (桃源仙谷 Mythical Valley) in Miyun county.

Staff of this scenic spot had prepared some icefalls and one ice column for climbers. Ma and his companion were going to try the ice column this time. "You risk much more when climbing an ice column," Ma said. When the sun's rays fall on an ice column, it melts at twice the speed of a natural icefall.

Ma began preparing his equipment as fast as possible, in order to finish climbing before the sun had risen too high in the sky. He fixed the belay

properly and touched the ice column to find that the melting surface had already become extremely slippery, after being only lightly touched by the sun's warming rays. It was not at all ideal weather for ice climbing, especially for ice column climbing.

Things would undoubtedly become worse by noon, so Ma set his first axe without going through the usual warm-up routine. His first axe simply shattered a large block of ice, so he had to try again. This time, after adjusting the angle and striking even harder, he placed his axe firmly; then another axe, and set his first step onto the ice column. He had to fight



hard for every centimeter of good solid ice. Every now and then, he was showered with ice, shattered into a thousand pieces by his axe, forcing him to pause to wipe his face with the sleeve of his jacket.

At the halfway point, Ma experienced the fatigue threshold he was quite familiar with. Though he found it an incredible effort to insert the pin of another crampon into the ice, he could not pause to rest, because of the danger of his toes becoming numb with cold. Meanwhile, the

warm rays of the sun were accelerating the melting of the ice. The resulting flow of water ran down the ice axes, wetting Ma's clothing. Raising his head to look at the top of the ice column, the big diamond seemed even more transparent, and the glare of the sun reflecting of the surface smarted his eyes behind the shade.

Moving with mechanical action, Ma drew nearer and nearer to the summit. The thought that climbing in the sun in the snow mountains of Yunnan would have been a more attractive option than standing beneath this barrage of falling ice and dripping water lingered in his mind. In his final effort before the top, he had to make several attempts to successfully fix his ice axes firmly. Only fifty minutes had

elapsed since his first step on the wall and gaining the summit, however it felt more like he had spent two hours on the glassy wall.

This is the fun of this sport: each time you suffer the feeling of loneliness, fatigue and desperation on the cold ice walls in some wild remote valley, you will resolve to stay away from this game for at least two years; however, after a few warm weekends of TV and comfortable living, you will forget your resolution and come back for another serving of masochistic pleasure, without any hesitation.

Where: Taoyuanxiangu Scenic

Spot, Miyun County (90 kilometers from Beijing, one and a half hours drive)
Getting there: Bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun, then bus heading for Sihetang (四合堂) to Nanshicheng.

Taoyuanxiangu offers a number of ice climbing alternatives;
Yinglang Rock - 15 meters high, 8 meters wide and gradient of 40 degrees; ideal for beginners.

Longtan Waterfall - 60 meters high, 55 meters wide and 85 degree gradient; rated difficult. Ice column - 35 meters high, 15 meters wide and 95 degree gradient. Ice climbing in Taoyuanxiangu might be a little difficult for amateur climbers; **Note:** Beware of falling icicles on warmer winter days;

Other ice climbing resorts around Beijing:

Yunmengxia (Yunmeng Valley)
Where: Yunmengxia (云蒙峡) Scenic Spot, Miyun County.

Details: Beginner level icefall 30 meters high, 15 meters wide and 85 degree gradient; Baichipu training icefall 80 meters high, 25 meters wide and 95 degree gradient.

Contact: 64063777
Heilongtan (Black Dragon Pool)
Where: Lupiguan, Shichengxiang (石城乡), Miyun County

Getting there: Bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun, then bus heading for Shicheng to Heilongtan. Suitable for beginners, with a gradient varying from 60 to 75 degrees.

Admittance: 16 yuan
Contact: 64063777
Jingdudiyipu (the Premier Waterfall of the

Capital)
Where: Shichengxiang, Miyun County
Getting there: Bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun, then bus heading for Sihetang to Jingdudiyipu.

Details: There are two icefalls here, one 20 meters and the other 62 meters high. These are a little more difficult than Heilongtan.

Admittance: 16 yuan
Contact: 64063777
Tianxianpu (Fairy Waterfall Valley)
Where: Shichengxiang, Miyun County
Getting there: Bus from Dongzhimen to Miyun, then bus heading for Sihetang to Tianxianpu.

Details: Tianxianpu, the biggest waterfall in the valley, has a drop of 100 meters, with a gradient varying between 80 and 90 degrees. Even the most skilled ice climbers find this one a challenge. Mixianpu, about 50 meters high, has a gradient varying between 70 and 80 degrees. Woxianpu, some 70 meters high, features a gradient of less than 70 degrees, and is suitable for beginners.
Contact: 65913807

Equipment

Want to experience extreme sports in Beijing? Professional equipment is a must, for the sake of safety, as well as to make your climbing easier. Some outdoors clubs in Beijing sell a wide variety of ice climbing gear that should satisfy most of your needs.

G-View (旗云) Adventure Equipment
This is a supplier of professional mountaineering gear. Various brands, both imported and domestic, of ice axes, ropes, webbing, slings, carabiners, quick draws, crampons, snowshoes, boots, ascenders, and more are available here. **Open:** Monday-Friday. **Where:** room 002, building D, Huayun Hotel Office Building, A 26 Zhanlan-guanlu (展览馆路). **Contact:** 68365520 **Website:** www.emg.com.cn

Fengyuxue (风雨雪) Outdoors Club
This club specializes in mountaineering and ice climbing. The shop sells many kinds of ice climbing equipment. **Where:** Ritan Park, Ritanbeilu, Jianguomenwai, Chaoyang District, Beijing. **Contact:** 65913807, 65930296 **Website:** www.e-outdoor.com.cn

Sanfo (三夫) Outdoor Club
Sanfo is one of the best known outdoors clubs in Beijing. Besides professional mountaineering gear, they also sell books, maps and second hand equipment. Goods include backpacks, tents, sleeping bags, clothing, boots, stoves, camping lamps, water bottles, cook wear, water treatment kits, crampons, ice axes and so on. **Where:** Sanfo Madian Shop 5, building 4, Madiannancun, Beijing. **Contact:** 62015550, 62015559. Sanfo Beijing University Shop: **Where:** 2 kilometers west of the south entrance of Yuanmingyuan (the Garden of Gardens). **Contact:** 62621005, 62621004. **Website:** www.sanfo.com.cn

Yuanfeiniaio (远飞鸟) Outdoors Club
Yuanfeiniaio stocks a full catalogue of mountaineering and ice climbing gear. **Where:** Building 3, Zhichunli (知春里), Haidian District **Contact:** 62347271

Training

No matter how good your equipment, you should not begin your ice climbing adventure without the instruction of a local ice climbing training school. Even if you are experienced in this sport, it is essential to hear the advice of local coaches and professionals who are familiar with the terrain. The following societies are a good starting point for gathering information about ice climbing around Beijing.

Fengyuxue Outdoor Club
This club is currently running an ice climbing training program at Taoyuanxiangu. Two-day courses will begin on January 18 and 27. Charges include: Transportation: 200 yuan; accommodation and food: 200 yuan; admittance for training center: 100 yuan; boots, crampons, and protective gear: 400 yuan; ice axes (short and long): 200 yuan; ice screw: 150 yuan; camping equipment: 150 yuan; coaches: 300 yuan. **Contact:** 65913807, 65930296

Tianyun (天运) Mountaineering Training Center (Beijing Youth Mountaineering Team)

The training course offered by this training center covers the technical aspects of mountaineering and ice climbing, camping, walking in snow and practice at ice climbing. Instructors are professional coaches from the China Mountaineering Association.

Details of the weekend training course: 8am: departure, 10am-3pm: climb the icefalls under the instruction of the coaches (hot drinks and pastries will be supplied), 3pm: local dinner, 4:20pm: return to Beijing

For detailed information please contact Shirley at 64063777.

China Mountaineering Team Training Base
This national mountaineering base offers instruction in making preparations for ice climbing, use of ropes, webbing and slings, maintenance of mountaineering equipment, climbing skills and first aid. Charges: 1,500 yuan for beginner course, 2,100 yuan for Advanced course.

Equipment fee: 300 yuan per person (unnecessary for those who will use their own gear). Accommodation: 120 yuan per person for athletes' apartment, 80 yuan per person for youth apartment, 80 yuan per person for local family. **Notes:** trainees should take their own mountaineering clothing, gloves, hat, boots, thick socks, shade, head lamp and knife. **Contact:** 69642947 (before January 30, 2002)

Leisurely Getaway

Ruins of Fragrant Hill Temple

By Gao Xing

Visitors to Fragrant Hill seldom stop off at the ruins of Fragrant Hill Temple. The temple originally comprised of five grand halls, and was the largest in the Fragrant Hill region. The halls disappeared long ago, now only the bases remain, but from them, we can see how magnificent the complex once was.

The huge stone screen standing in front of the base of the main hall is carved with thousands of small Chinese characters on one side. All the characters are arranged in forms of Buddhist pagodas and calabashes. No visitor can help but trace the characters with their fingers, as though reading a Braille manuscript. The back of the screen is carved with poems of Emperor Qianlong and the images of Bodhisattvas Gufo, Guanyin and Puxian. The top of the screen is decorated with western style patterns, reminiscent of the ruins at Yuanmingyuan. A stone tablet can be found on the left of the base of the main hall, bearing the Bodhi Tree Hymn composed by the Emperor Qianlong. Two statues of warrior attendants stand on either side of the tablet, holding sticks, swords and axes in their hands.

An ancient pine tree standing in the center of the courtyard tilts towards the main hall. It is said that a renowned monk once preached to the crowds in the temple. His presentation was so appealing that even the pine tree behind the main hall leant towards the hall in an effort to hear him more clearly. The Emperor Qianlong liked this legend very much, so he named the pine Tingfasong (Listening To Gospel Pine Tree).

A stone bridge and a square pool can be found in the lowest part of the courtyard. The railing of the bridge is carved with chrysanthemum, pomegranate, dragon, phoenix and peony patterns, all symbolizing blessings.

Where: in the Fragrant Hill Park **Admittance:** 5 yuan



Photo by Gao Xing